

From Constantinople to the Frontier

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From Constantinople to the Frontier

The City and the Cities

Edited by

Nicholas S. M. Matheou, Theofili Kampianaki
and Lorenzo M. Bondioli



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Preface

This volume originated in a conference that took place in Oxford, February 2014, under the title *The City and the Cities: From Constantinople to the Frontier*. The present editors were then the executive committee of the Oxford University Byzantine Society, and the conference was the society's sixteenth international graduate conference. The OUBS is a student-run organisation, and has for a number of years been at the centre of Oxford's Late Antique and Byzantine studies community, helping to integrate new students, organising events and research trips, and sending weekly mailing lists on happenings at the university and worldwide.

Nevertheless, despite an ever-expanding annual remit, the society's key *raison d'être* remains the international graduate conference. This event has grown year on year – now entering its eighteenth – and has blossomed into the world's largest forum for the presentation of pre-doctoral and doctoral research into all facets of the Late Antique and Byzantine worlds. The conference's success is not, of course, a testament solely to the strength of Late Antique and Byzantine studies in Oxford, or even the United Kingdom, but to its strength worldwide. In 2014 there were forty-eight speakers from twenty-four different global institutions, including North and South America, Europe, Russia and East Asia. With such geographic spread Late Antique and Byzantine studies is a truly 'cosmopolitan' discipline – and indeed the sheer breadth of topics coming under that banner belies the restrictive term 'discipline'. The questions asked by scholars of late antique and Byzantine states and societies provide unique insights and methodologies relevant not only to the study of the later Roman empires, but also to Mediterranean, Near Eastern, Classical, Islamic and Medieval studies more broadly. Selected papers were published for the first time from the 2013 conference,¹ an important milestone, and one which provided a significant opportunity in planning the immediately succeeding event.

Bearing this opportunity in mind we elected for a more focused theme than had previously been the case, so as to best exploit the opportunity presented to us, and to best demonstrate the dynamism and exciting potential of the discipline's pre-doctoral and doctoral scholars. Beginning with the concept of centres and peripheries, we focused specifically on the urban aspects of this paradigm. Thus we asked prospective delegates to address a number of key and persistent questions, questions such as what is the place of Constantinople in

¹ Maximilian Lau, Caterina Franchi and Morgan di Rodi eds, *Landscapes of Power* (Oxford, 2014).

the Byzantine world? What of the other urban centres – Antioch, Alexandria, Thessalonike, indeed the elder Rome itself – how do they interact with imperial centres, and what of the shifting frontiers? To take one exemplary problem, why do we talk of a ‘Byzantine Empire’ lasting from Constantine I to Konstantinos XI Palaiologos, when the Roman polity had a previous existence of more than half a millennium, and Trebizond survived as the final imperial city until 1461? The answer is inextricably tied with the lifespan of Christian Constantinople and a focus on that as the ‘true’ centre, with Trebizond understood as mere periphery.

Among the papers eventually presented at the conference, a common concern was the interconnections which urban spaces create: between City and cities, city and country, and across the frontier. Rather than landscapes, physical structures, and civic development – the core themes of urban history proper – delegates discussed how human actions and relationships worked within and between these spaces, and how the spaces and relationships themselves were ideologically constructed and understood.

Such questions are relevant beyond the study of history, in our own contemporary world. It is an inescapable fact that the very term we use for complex human society, ‘civilisation’, is one fundamentally based in an ideal of urban life. Although the past must never be seen as a road map for the future, it is our belief that historians should discern where the concerns of their research intersect with those of the contemporary world. In 1850 the United Kingdom became the first non-city state in history to have a majority urban population. In 2010 the world’s urban population overtook its rural population, in completion of this momentous historical shift. The UK provides another obvious instance of intersection, London, a city variously described as single-handedly keeping the country on the global stage or as the single-worst drain on the state’s human and physical resources – a dichotomy not unlike scholarly debates on Constantinople’s role. With ongoing refugee and migrant crises, today as in the past the dialectic between heartland and frontier, City and cities, remains crucial.

The present volume reflects these themes and concerns. Dealing more with centre and periphery through an urban lens than with urbanism *per se*, the contributions are not comparative studies of cities in the late antique and medieval Roman empires. To recognise this we have reversed the conference’s title, hence *From Constantinople to the Frontier: The City and the Cities*. This dialectic between City, cities, and frontier is present throughout, and we have structured the volume so as to highlight comparative aspects between the chapters. In the introduction Averil Cameron masterfully draws together the themes of each individual contribution, so here we have limited ourselves

to a few words on the sections and volume as a whole, and the conceptualisation behind the arrangement.

The chapters of the first section directly grapple with the City itself, Constantinople, often viewed as the very definition of later Roman states and societies, a position clearly implied in the *terminus technicus* 'Byzantium'. However, rather than focus on the development of Constantinople as an urban centre or its structural socio-economic and administrative position, relatively well-researched topics, these contributions focus on the City's literary, ideological, and social construction from the fifth to the thirteenth centuries. They illustrate in common that a given space's prominence can never be taken for granted, and that its significance is always a matter of discursive negotiation among literary elites. Thus the City's ideological position was not a fixed objectivity, but was rather composed of a matrix of semiotic factors which allowed room for varying understandings and representations, differing perspectives inevitably informed by a given actor's relational position to the imperial centre.

In section two we turn to the *minutiae* of these relational positions and the networks of influence and patronage which they created. Focusing on particular actors from the fifth to eleventh centuries, these chapters provide three important case studies for the practices, methods, and routes by which important figures in the ecclesiastical and imperial administrations exploited their position to effect political action. Whether practicing as a 'middle man' between imperial blocs, using financial influence in religious controversies, or manipulating filial discourse to impact the province from the City, there are clear commonalities in the connectivity-based exercise of power.

Section three turns to an issue of paramount importance, the impact of Christianity on the social use and understanding of urban spaces, and the imperial centre's ability to influence attendant provincial developments. Focusing on the fourth to seventh centuries, the years in which Christianity rose to dominance, these papers analyse the interplay between the civic and the holy from a variety of approaches. Rather than concentrate solely on the rise of the bishop as a focus for urban organisation, the chapters elucidate the multifarious ways in which new Christian discourses and modes of power impacted the pre-existing socio-intellectual landscape. Moreover, they draw attention to the varying trends and strategies that emerged within this trajectory, whether the infusion of classical civic paradigms with Christian significance, or the development of a localised episcopal status able to exist independently of a bishop's personal charisma.

In section four the volume's scope opens up to take in the other cities of the Byzantine world writ large, spanning the fifth to thirteenth centuries, and approached from a variety of perspectives. Analysing the pragmatics of

economic material culture, utilising network theory to examine the movement of actors between centres, and studying the reception and re-use of metropolitan artistic forms, these papers illustrate the real variety of factors, strategies and spaces involved in the dialectic between City, city, and frontier.

Section five leads directly on from this theme, but to focus specifically on aspects of reception and response. As demonstrated for Constantinople in section one, the significance of any spatial relationship depends on social and literary negotiation, in essence the formation of narrative through the signification of particular instances of action and reaction. The three papers of this section thus provide three paradigmatic examples of this process, concentrating on the centuries of Islam's rise to regional dominance. They uncover the strategies by which actors in the former and remaining Roman world sought to understand this momentous shift, and to package events into a suitable framework for socio-political action.

Section six focuses our attention on literary material itself – our key point of scholarly access – and provides three illustrations of how centre and periphery are reflected in the study of such sources. Indeed, nowhere is the dialectic between spaces of more paramount importance than in the circulation of texts, and the ways in which they are integrated into social networks. These papers all deal with the so-called 'middle period', between the eighth and twelfth centuries, discussing various aspects of literary production and education in medieval New Rome. Dealing with the question of scribal activity itself, the use of earlier works in later productions, and the very conceptualisation of Constantinopolitan education, these papers remind us that we must be subtle in our handling of literary production, circulation, and education.

Finally, in section seven we are taken to the frontier, and the various approaches by which this can be deconstructed and understood. These chapters concentrate on the central medieval era, from the tenth to thirteenth centuries, and range from southern Italy through the Balkans to Anatolia and Caucasia. Their scope is remarkable, analysing urban growth on the 'periphery', the purposeful circulation and use of historical material between City and cities, the interconnectivity of artistic production in frontier zones, the literary construction of 'borderiness', and the interplay of all these factors in imperial campaigns to establish control over new frontier lands. Importantly, all the papers in this section have significant bases for comparison with contributions of earlier sections, either in method or material. Illustrating clearly the value of a de-centred, multi-directional approach to the understanding of urban centres and peripheries, they provide a more than fitting conclusion to the volume.

There are a number of rationales by which to arrange a volume of collected papers, and our solutions will not be those favoured by others. We have prioritised a thematic and comparative arrangement over chronology or discipline, hoping thereby to illustrate that these divisions should not *a priori* dictate our research questions or perspectives. The sections are arranged so as to begin with the City, move to the cities, and end at the frontier, with thematic digressions providing a panorama of this journey. Ultimately the volume should not be seen as an attempt to give a ‘final word’ on urban centres and peripheries in the Late Antique and Byzantine worlds – far from it. Rather, we hope that the exciting arguments and material to be found in each chapter will inspire readers to ask similar questions of other regions, evidence, and periods.

The Editors

Oxford and Princeton, April 2016

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Philipp Winterhager

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Note on Names and Terms

The languages dealt with in this volume are many and various, and consistency in their treatment has been a key concern. It is our belief that Anglicisation can be an unhelpful practice, and is in any case almost always applied inconsistently. Moreover in many sub-disciplines of Late Antique, Byzantine, Medieval, and Oriental studies Anglicisation is explicitly avoided. Thus, in the interests of balance and consistency, we have elected for a strict policy of transliteration, so that, for example, he is ‘Ioannes’ rather than ‘John’ Zonaras, and terms such as *kouropalatēs* are given with full diacritics in order that original spellings are easily predictable. Nevertheless, in cases where a figure is so famous that this would be confusing, such as with Constantine I or Gregory of Nazianzos, the English version been preferred. Similarly, we recognise that the conventions of Francophone scholarship are quite different, and so French-language papers have kept to these. No doubt these solutions will not be those favoured by others, but we hope readers understand our choices and ask their forbearance should they disagree.

Introduction

Averil Cameron

When we think of Byzantium we usually think of Constantinople, the city named after himself by Constantine I in the fourth century, the home of the emperor and the imperial court based in the Great Palace also begun by Constantine, with its adjoining Hippodrome and its great square leading to Hagia Sophia, the ‘Great Church’. It is hard not to have in mind one’s own experiences as a visitor to Istanbul, especially the vivid sense of a city on the water, with small boats and big ships alike sailing up and down the Bosphorus, and the water of the Golden Horn still dividing the old city from the very different modern neighbourhood that was the Pera of Byzantine times, the quarter packed with traders, Italians and Jews. Even if Constantine did not view it himself as a new capital replacing Rome, Constantinople became and remained the centre of Byzantine government and cultural life until its disastrous sack by the Fourth Crusade in 1204. Even then, the new Latin emperor and patriarch could not remove the traces of centuries of Byzantine tradition, and in 1261 the Byzantine government in exile across the water at Nicaea returned to Constantinople. For more than two centuries the city was the Byzantine capital once again under the Palaiologan dynasty, though the empire had fragmented and Constantinople now co-existed with several other Byzantine princedoms, in Greece and at Trebizond on the Black Sea. Its territorial reach was now severely limited and its survival precarious, given the threat from other powers and especially from the Ottoman Turks, but it kept its glamour when viewed by visitors and outsiders, and was again home to a brilliant cultural life. Within the city there were now gardens and allotments; the emperor and court had long left the Great Palace for the city’s northern limits at Blachernai, but their ceremonial and their imperial consciousness survived the onslaughts of military threat and civil war.

This extraordinary longevity of urban life has impressed historians and struck the imagination of the public. Nearly five centuries of Ottoman rule changed Constantinople into Istanbul and gave it an array of great buildings to rival Hagia Sophia. Yet Istanbul today is still recognizably the old capital of Byzantium.

Nevertheless, a view of Byzantium that equates urban life only with Constantinople is seriously mistaken. Thessalonike, the ‘second city of Byzantium’, and since it became part of the Greek state in the early twentieth century the most important city in Greece after Athens, was an independent centre of urban life that had close links with Constantinople and at times rivalled

it. It was the city of which the great theologian Saint Gregory Palamas was archbishop in the fourteenth century, and its proximity to the great monasteries that were founded on Mount Athos from the tenth century onwards gave it a special place in Byzantine religious and indeed economic life. In the early period of Byzantium the ancient city that had been re-founded and re-named as Constantinople was part of an existing dense network of cities in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, and some felt that it siphoned resources and population away from them. Constantine's building programme and lavish endowments had made living there highly desirable, and the prospect of entering imperial service and acquiring a job or a dignity and a salary exerted a powerful attraction for those who had acquired the necessary *paideia*, the rhetorical training that was considered the essential qualification for public life throughout the history of the empire. The mansions and palaces built in the city in the fifth century testified to the success of Constantine's policy, and by the time of Justinian in the sixth century the population came close to half a million.

However, the late antique network of urban life in the eastern Mediterranean suffered a severe blow in the aftermath of the Arab conquests of the seventh century, when the provinces of the eastern Mediterranean, including Egypt (and North Africa) were lost to Arab rule. But despite the rapid success of the Umayyads as a naval power in the Mediterranean, a Byzantine toehold was maintained in Cyprus, and while Crete was lost in the ninth century, it was regained in the 960s. Byzantium proved to be unexpectedly resilient. In the tenth century territory was recovered in the east, while in mainland Greece Thebes and other towns became centres of trade and production. Byzantium also held on to southern Italy, with its major centre at Bari, until 1071, and Dyrrachium (Durrës in modern Albania) remained a key outpost in the Komnenian period of the late-eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The advent of the Crusades, and especially the sack and capture of Constantinople in 1204, brought major changes and new complexities, as did the Byzantine return to Constantinople in 1261. There cannot be any single account of the relation of cities and centre in the long and changing history of Byzantium. Yet as the papers in this book show, certain themes emerge and re-emerge. The contributions that follow are testimony to the variety and resilience of Byzantine history, and to the immense range it covers. This is the second volume to be published that arises from the annual international conference organized by the graduate students in Byzantine studies at Oxford,¹

1 For the first, see Maximilian Lau, Caterina Franchi, and Morgan Di Rodi, eds., *Landscapes of Power. Selected Papers from the xvth Oxford University Byzantine Society International Graduate Conference* (Oxford, 2014).

and the number of papers selected for inclusion, all peer-reviewed, tell us much about the vitality of the subject and the energy of its student members, as well as about the attraction of the annual conferences to an impressively wide range of international participants. In such circumstances the selection of papers was not easy, and the quality of the contributions that follow is high indeed. Thanks to the generosity of the A. G. Leventis Foundation the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research (OCBR) has again been able to support the publication, and as the latter's chair I am privileged to have been invited to write this introduction.

A theme that runs through the volume, and indeed through the history of Byzantium, is that of perceptions of Constantinople and the empire, both by the Byzantines themselves and by others. The latter naturally depended on time, place and changing circumstances, but the former could also vary, giving the lie to the modern myth of Byzantium as an unchanging entity living within its own stereotypes. In the first paper, Lynton Boshoff analyses a panegyric poem on the short-lived western emperor Anthemius (467–72) by the Latin poet Sidonius to show that in these last moments of imperial rule in the west Constantinople and the eastern empire were viewed with reserve as well as admiration. Anthemius owed his throne to the eastern emperor Leo, and in Sidonius's poem, seen from the western point of view, the mythological Aurora, representing the east, is given a role that allows the poet to skim rather lightly over the real appearance and importance of Constantinople. In 476 the last Roman emperor in the west was deposed. Sidonius was rewarded for his panegyric by being made urban prefect, and lived through the transition to Germanic rule as bishop of Clermont-Ferrand in his native Gaul. By the eighth century, when Egypt was out of Byzantine control, attitudes to the empire among Christians there were mixed, as Cecilia Palombo shows. She is able to demonstrate that the lack of familiarity with Coptic and Arabic on the part of most Byzantinists has led to misleading assumptions and a narrative of the Byzantine-Arab transition that must now be challenged. Philipp Winterhager's paper brings out the ambiguities inherent in the opposition to imperial ecclesiastical policy launched by Maximus the Confessor from Rome in the 640s. At his trial for treason in 655, after his arrest and detention in exile by the imperial authorities, he is asked why he loves the Romans and hates the Greeks. He answers that he loves Rome because he is of the same doctrinal views as Rome, but loves 'the Greeks', that is the Byzantines, because of his shared language with them. Such were the political and identity issues raised when the seventh-century papacy seemed to be upholding orthodoxy against a heretical Monothelite Constantinople. According to Winterhager Maximus was a 'migrant'; if we look at him in this perspective, and in the perspective of the networks to which he belonged, his case illustrates both the ambiguities

that surround all migrants, and the ease with which Constantinople could be displaced in the imagination from its position of authority.

Vincent Tremblay also addresses the period of transition from the urbanized world of late antiquity, this time starting from the case of the Balkans and the impact of the Slavs. Between the sixth and the twelfth centuries, he argues, Constantinople came to see itself in a much narrower sense, as the sole location of Byzantine culture and identity. Urban centres in the Balkans had shrunk more quickly and more dramatically than those in the east, and for Michael Psellos in the eleventh century the Balkans represented an ‘ocean of cultural mediocrity’. It became easy to think in terms of a sharp divide between civilization and all that lay beyond, a categorization that in eleventh-century rhetoric included not only the Serbs and the Bulgarians, but also extended much more widely to other provincials. Despite Konstantinos VII’s tenth-century handbook on diplomacy, the *De Adnistrando Imperio*, twelfth-century Constantinople thought of itself as a city-state, a *politeia*, and relegated its own provinces to the realm of the ‘other’. Twelfth-century Constantinopolitan perceptions are also the subject of the paper by Nicholas S. M. Matheou, one of the three editors of the volume, who starts from the focus on Constantinople in the *Epitome* of the historian Zonaras, analysing its preface in particular. Here Zonaras explains the ancient history of the Jews in their city of Jerusalem, and contrasts it with Roman constitutional history in both Rome and Constantinople. Zonaras is generally interested in constitutional history, encapsulated in the term *basileia*. For him the foundation of Constantinople presaged a transition to tyranny: the Byzantines could be critical of their own government as well as admiring.

Another group of papers addresses the way in which individuals obtained influence within Constantinople, in what Walter F. Beers, writing of the fifth century, calls an ‘influence economy’. It is well known, and often found scandalous, that when the great theologian and bishop Cyril of Alexandria wanted to ensure the success of his position in the run-up to the Council of Ephesus, he sent lavish gifts to a wide range of potential supporters in the capital. Beers shows that while this was in fact the expected mode of operating, the amounts in Cyril’s case, and the number and spread of the recipients were exceptional. Justinian tried to limit the practice, and Cyril was taking some risks. Andrew M. Small, writing of Liudprand of Cremona, a famous visitor to Constantinople in the tenth century, shows how the Italian Liudprand and his family had gained leverage in Constantinople, and how the Byzantines dealt with issues of client management. He is able to demonstrate that the evidence from Liudprand’s journeys to Constantinople (usually read for his unflattering remarks about the Byzantine court) and his other writings can tell us both about the possibilities

that existed for outsiders of acquiring influence there and about Byzantine client dealings. ‘Friendship’, in the sense of patronage and epistolary networks, is a well-known theme in the analysis of Byzantine society, and it was frequently about gaining and exerting influence. Jonas Nilsson uses some of the hundreds of surviving letters of the eleventh-century writer and intellectual Michael Psellos to show how in his letters to provincial judges, or *kritai*, he intervened in ‘a curious mixture of friendship and justice’ on behalf of those he knew, tried to ensure that imperial laws were actually carried out, and argued for the interests of those who could not stand up well for themselves. In contrast with our own squeamishness on such matters, Psellos took it for granted that such personal intervention was entirely appropriate.

One area in which cities and capital were often interrelated was that of religious life and ecclesiastical institutions. Robson Della Torre returns to the much-debated issue of Eusebius of Caesarea and his controversial portrayal of the emperor Constantine. Here however he asks how Eusebius depicted the city of Caesarea in Palestine, of which he was himself the bishop, and where the great theologian Origen had taught in the third century. Della Torre analyses Eusebius’s information on the Christian history of Caesarea in his *Ecclesiastical History* and shows that he associates its church as a Petrine foundation with Rome rather than Alexandria. Local church politics did not merely affect the relation of Caesarea to Jerusalem, as has been argued previously, and Eusebius’s vision extended much more widely. Byron MacDougall’s paper starts from an account of a festival at the great shrine of Thekla at Seleucia in southern Turkey, which was a major recipient of imperial patronage in the late-fourth and fifth centuries. He then goes on to consider other religious festivals, Christian and non-Christian, and shows the continued life of Platonic ideas about experiencing the divine through *theoria*, that is, spectatorship and contemplation.

Imperial patronage also extended to monastic foundations, whose leaders, like the sixth-century Palestinian abbot Saint Sabas, also did their best to win influence in the capital. Sabas was a considerable operator in terms of gaining influence in Constantinople and defending Chalcedonian orthodoxy in the monasteries of Palestine, as Daniel Neary shows. The larger of the many monasteries in the Judean desert were important institutions that played a central role in opposing imperial religious policy in the seventh century, a time that also saw the Persian conquest and years of Persian rule that were followed by imperial Byzantine success but immediately afterwards by the Arab invasions. The size of some of these monasteries made them dependent on external patronage, and in the sixth century, Neary argues, they competed for imperial support, as the monastic institutions of Gaza had done a little earlier.

The process is documented in several hagiographical works, each with its own point to make. The relation between monks and bishops was also sometimes uneasy. David Gyllenhaal considers the prominent role played by bishops in many of the eastern urban centres that came under siege in the Persian wars of the sixth and early seventh centuries, including in his discussion the great siege of Constantinople itself by Persians and Avars in AD 626. Some bishops, like Jacob of Nisibis, claimed to be the personal defenders of their city; others, however, were a disappointment, and Gyllenhaal memorably discusses 'episcopal mediocrity' in relation to these. He also shows how over this period the role of the bishop was challenged by a different focus on relics, icons and saintly or divine defenders; this is shown vividly in the cases of Edessa, Thessalonike and indeed Constantinople itself.

Christopher Bonura's paper shows that religious connections between the eastern Mediterranean and Constantinople continued in the centuries after the Arab conquests, arguing that a Greek translation of the late-seventh century Syriac *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, composed under the impact of Islamic rule, already existed in the early eighth century and was the base for the eighth-century Latin translation. He suggests that the Greek translation was made by the Armenian bishop Step'anos of Siwnik', who we know translated the *Apocalypse* into Armenian and who was in Constantinople in the early eighth century, translating Greek patristic works. If Bonura is right, this would be a new indication of the circulation of texts and ideas between Constantinople and the east in the so-called 'dark ages'. Jakub Sypiański follows this theme, but in the ninth century, with the arrival in Constantinople of the Palestinian monks Georgios and Michael Synkellos, and their connection with Studite circles in the capital. Awareness of Islam and Arab culture in Constantinople developed and was manifested in several different ways. Sypiański goes on to consider relations between Constantinople and the caliphate, and the diplomatic initiatives of the emperor Theophilos (829–42), awareness of Islam in Byzantine writing, and the hagiographic presentation of Byzantine-Arab frontier clashes. He shows, against the common view, that Abbasid Baghdad did not have a monopoly of intellectual and scientific developments in the ninth century; instead, Byzantines and Arabs engaged in a lively and mutual cultural rivalry.

This was made possible on the Byzantine side by the educational system, whose fortunes are harder to trace in the century or so after AD 650, yet which somehow survived, to 'revive' from about 800, ushering in a new period of scholarship and cultural energy. The books that were collected and read were of course still handwritten, and the value of the information contained in the headings and additions, termed 'colophons', by those who copied them

is increasingly being recognized. Many manuscripts were lost in the change of Greek script from majuscule (capitals) to minuscule, and dated colophons only begin in the ninth century. Jeremiah Coogan has studied some four hundred examples of these, up to the year 1200, and raises interesting questions such as the implications of the fact that many manuscripts were copied in monasteries, and the evidence they provide for monastic, ecclesiastical and secular titles. Although manuscripts were often monastic productions, as is common across the medieval world, significant numbers were copied in urban ecclesiastical and official contexts, and we can sometimes observe the same scribe in action in more than one surviving manuscript. Finally, manuscripts copied even by monks and ecclesiastics included classical literary texts. This is important research, and the study of manuscripts is one of the central needs in Byzantine studies.

Theofili Kampianaki, also an editor of the volume, writes about one of the most interesting intellectuals in Byzantium, the eleventh-century writer Michael Psellos, and his chronicle, or *Historia syntomos*, in which he says he will record the rulers of 'Elder' and 'Younger' Rome, the latter being Constantinople. The work runs from the mythical foundation of Rome by Romulus in 754 BC to the reign of Basileios II (976–1025) and was first critically edited only in 1990. Kampaniaki shows that Psellos's work attributes many sayings to individual emperors, and belongs to an eleventh- and twelfth-century trend towards collecting and using such sayings in literary works. The question is whether Psellos used such a collection himself, and Kampaniaki argues for a collection of imperial sayings, perhaps of the eighth or early ninth century, which must have contained both theological and secular sayings. Psellos emerges from this new study as a man of his time. Finally in this section Valeria Flavia Lovato discusses the twelfth-century scholar and writer Ioannes Tzetzes, one of the greatest figures in the history of classical scholarship in Byzantium, and the use he made of the figure of Odysseus, whose negativity contrasts with the presentation of Odysseus as a philosopher by his contemporary Eustathios. This entails an enquiry into Tzetzes' possible sources as well as into broader intellectual issues in the twelfth century. Drawing on one of Tzetzes' letters, Lovato points to negativity also in Tzetzes' approach to philosophy, and goes on to connect his attitude to Odysseus to the contemporary tension between philosophy and rhetoric and to Tzetzes' hostility to the former, especially to Plato.

Visual art as a potential carrier of cultural influence is the subject of the papers by Sarah C. Simmons, Franka Horvat and Maria Alessia Rossi. Simmons' subject is the eleventh-century frescoes in the southern chapels of the church of St. Sophia in Kiev. The question of Byzantine influence on this church, whose construction was begun in 1037 by Jaroslav I, son of Vladimir, the first Christian

ruler of Rus', has been a matter of controversy, and the frescoes in its chapels have not previously been studied in this context. Simmons argues that the two southernmost of the four chapels, dedicated to Saint Michael and to Joachim and Anna, used the iconographic themes of Constantine I and Helena, and of Mary in the Temple at Jerusalem, to suggest God's favour to Jaroslav and the role of the princes of Rus' as church builders, Christian rulers and the founders of a new Temple. Horvat takes us to the church of St. Chrysogonus in Zara (Zadar) in Dalmatia, part of a Benedictine monastery with Byzantine-style frescoes whose influence Horvat connects with Apulia in southern Italy. The church was built in 1175 and the frescoes completed soon after, and belongs in a Latin context. Nevertheless, its architecture has already been associated with that of Bari, and Horvat emphasizes the importance of trans-Adriatic connections both earlier and in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. She draws an intriguing parallel between the frescoes at Zara and those in four rock-cut churches in Apulia, a region where both Latin and Greek rites were in use, and where, as she points out, the inscriptions are in both Greek and Latin. Unlike St. Sophia at Kiev, this is not a case of princely ideology, but of cultural transmission at a different level. Rossi turns to the fourteenth century, a period when there were several centres of Byzantine rule, and discusses three Byzantine cycles of the miracles of Christ, in the Chora monastery in Constantinople, the *parekklesion* of St. Euthymios in Thessalonike and the Aphendiko church at Mistra, all of which were completed in the early years of the century. She finds that although the three cycles differ from each other, their common theme relates to the closeness of all three patrons – a monk, a general and a high official – to the court of Andronikos II, and presents the period as a heralding 'a new era of the miraculous'. This is a case of lateral connections, which show both the fragmentation of Palaiologan Byzantium and the threads which nevertheless held it together.

While not dealing with visual art, Pavla Drápelová's paper also concerns matters of iconography, focusing in contrast on a much earlier period, when Byzantine rule still extended over the eastern Mediterranean. Drápelová discusses the unique features of the bronze coinage minted in Antioch in the sixth century in their iconography, lettering and mintmarks. Antioch experienced severe threats of several kinds in the first half of the sixth century, leading to interruption in coin production, while local officials perhaps had less expertise in Latin than their counterparts in the capital. Since Constantinopolitan coins were also much used in the vicinity, the Antiochene mint seems to have functioned mainly on a local basis to suit local needs.

The papers in the last section take us to the frontiers of Byzantium from the tenth century onwards. An episode narrated in the *De Administrando Imperio*

concerns the Georgian *kastron* of Artanuji (modern Ardanuç in Turkish), and Nicholas Evans shows from Georgian sources that the local Bagrationi rulers ‘looked both ways’ – that is, that they negotiated their position both at home and in relation to Constantinople through titles and privileges. Georgian monks also acted as facilitators while at the same time extending their own monastic networks in Iberia, and finally he argues that the Bagrationis probably inherited fiscal and other systems dating from the ‘Abbasid period, which may explain the otherwise odd terminology used in the *DAI* about parts of the *kastron*. The Byzantine ‘frontier’ was never very fixed, and it changed as Byzantine fortunes declined or improved. In Evans’ paper Georgian sources are deployed to advantage, enabling a better understanding of an otherwise puzzling passage in a Constantinopolitan source. Lorenzo M. Bondioli, another of the volume’s editors, also discusses the *DAI*, this time with a focus on the text’s description of southern Italy, which he argues is aimed at ‘shaping and justifying the present’ rather than giving an accurate account of the past. The late-ninth century Byzantine theme of Langobardia represented a major consolidation after a difficult time for Byzantine Italy. Bondioli argues that the relevant passage in the *DAI* is constructed with this achievement in mind. It may derive from a written, rather than an oral, ‘dossier’, and incorporates southern Lombard material as well as Byzantine records, for instance in the urban geography of southern Italy, distorting historical accuracy in order to make a contemporary point. At the same time the *DAI* justifies the role of Constantinople in southern Italy against the ambitions of the Carolingian Louis II by drawing on a local story that acted to his discredit. Not merely did the *DAI* manipulate the narrative of historical events to suit a Byzantine agenda, but it did so by using local versions emanating from the very region it is describing.

Roman Shliakhtin and Maximilian Lau both deal with the reign of the emperor Ioannes II Komnenos, albeit in different ways. Shliakhtin’s focus is on poem IV of Theodoros Prodromos, on the Byzantine siege and capture of Kastamon in Paphlagonia in 1134. From the perspective of the poet, and from the perspective of Constantinople, this success (which was to prove temporary) could be depicted as pushing the frontier forward and leading to the eventual conquest of Anatolia, which Prodromos calls ‘Persia’. Byzantine conceptions of space were such that political geography was seen from the capital’s perspective, and everything beyond the ‘frontier’, or border, or more accurately, beyond an element of Byzantine control, was the land of barbarians. Maximilian Lau focuses on the fortification at Lopadion, west of modern Bursa, which was important for routes to and from Constantinople, and which has also been associated with Ioannes II Komnenos. Lau argues that the settlement itself predated the Komnenoi, even if Ioannes II did build the fort

there. The emperor spent the winter of 1135 there and used it as his forward base for military operations for several years thereafter. Lau argues that its size made it much more than the 'fortified camp' described in the scholarly literature and recalls that Theodoros Prodromos accompanied the emperor there on one of his visits, and wrote a poem about the 'city' of Lopadion. As with Kastamon, Prodromos depicts Lopadion as a key element in the Byzantine effort against the 'Persians', and Lau sees its development both as an essentially colonizing endeavour, and as part of a network of fortresses aimed at securing the Byzantine presence in western Anatolia, a place where imperial ideology, military effort and geographical imagination came together.

The papers in this volume give us a vivid sense of the variety and complexity of relations between Constantinople and the provinces, and of how Byzantine influence could also transcend chronological and geographical borderlines. These connections could be lateral, or top-down, or they could reflect the perceptions of the capital from outside. They could be expressed in literature or visual art, through material culture or through historical events, politics or ideology. Throughout its existence, Constantinople, 'the City', held a dominant place in the imagination of the Byzantines themselves as well as fascinating generations of foreigners. Yet just as the empire's frontiers grew and shrank many times over its long history, so the relations between City and cities, and the perceptions of 'the City' themselves changed. Whether we call Byzantium an empire, or as has recently been argued, a 'city-state', or even a republic, it was a state and a society that were both dynamic and multi-faceted. That is what these twenty-five papers demonstrate, and their authors, and the editors of the volume, are to be warmly congratulated.

PART 1

The City



Looking Eastwards: The *Regina Orientis* in Sidonius Apollinaris' *Carmen* 2

Lynton Boshoff

Introduction

Performed at Rome in 468 AD on the occasion of emperor Anthemius' assumption of his second consulship, *Carmen* 2 is the last in a series of three imperial panegyrics written in verse by Sidonius Apollinaris, member of the Gallic aristocracy, *littérateur*, and future bishop of Clermont-Ferrand.¹ Although collated first in the manuscripts, this panegyric marks the end of Sidonius' career as a poet. Until this point, the Western Empire had seen a quick turnover of minor emperors, especially in the two decades before the performance of *Carmen* 2, as well as a gradual loss of territory to the Vandals and the Visigoths. The candidates for emperor more often than not were puppets of more powerful military figures, and, as a result of this control, imperial authority often seemed in reality to be acknowledged only in Italy as opposed to the provinces, let alone in the eastern empire. Consequently, the provincial aristocracy was increasingly left to its own devices, leading to conflict between various factions as they vied for supremacy in the political life of the West. It is this uncertain political landscape, and its future prospects, that Sidonius had to respond to in his verse.

The circumstances surrounding the composition of the present panegyric are not entirely clear. Sidonius himself says in a letter to a certain Heronius that the poem was written in haste while he was in Rome as part of a delegation

¹ The principal study of the life of Sidonius is Jill Harries, *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome* (Oxford, 1994), for an overview of Sidonius' life related to his literary output see pp. 1–19. For editions of the poems with translations, as well as a sketch of Sidonius' life and works, see *Sidonius Apollinaris. Poems and Letters*, ed. and trans. W. B. Anderson, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), and *Sidoine Apollinaire. Poèmes, t. 1*, ed. and trans. André Loyer (Paris, 1960). The edition that is followed here is that of Loyer. Though somewhat dated, see also André Loyer, *Recherches historiques sur les panégyriques de Sidoine Apollinaire* (Paris, 1942). For details of Anthemius' life, see Dirk Henning, *Periclitans res publica: Kaisertum und Eliten in der Krise des Weströmischen Reiches 454/5–493 N.Chr.* (Stuttgart, 1999), pp. 42–46.

from Gaul, the objectives of which he does not elaborate on further.² The delegation had been there some time already, it would seem, as Sidonius also describes being present for the wedding of Anthemius' daughter Alypia to the so-called 'kingmaker' Ricimer. Unlike the dedicatees of the two previous panegyrics, Anthemius is a foreigner, having acceded to the throne through the efforts of the eastern emperor Leo. As noted, this manner of accession was not alien to Sidonius. After all, Avitus, the recipient of his first panegyric some thirteen years earlier, was placed on the throne with the backing of Theodoric II. Majorianus, Avitus' successor and dedicatee of the second panegyric, conspired in turn with Ricimer to assassinate Avitus and claim the throne. As a result, the production of panegyrics for each of the three emperors should not be thought of as showing the same levels of loyalty towards or expectation of the emperors, or indeed the same intention on Sidonius' part.³

2 See Sidonius, *Epistula* 1.9.5–6: "And then, while we were discussing something about the petitions of the Arvernian embassy, the Kalends of January were suddenly upon us, which expected that the emperor's name would soon be found in the consular lists. Then our host said: 'Well now, my dear Sollius, although you are pressed by the duty of your business here, I would like that you make use of your old poetry in praise of our new consul, and make with hasty lyric a few votive verses'" (*ilicet, dum per hunc amplissimum virum aliquid de legationis Arvernae petitionibus elaboramus, ecce et Kalendae Ianuariae, quae Augusti consulis mox futuri repetendum fastis nomen opperiebantur. tunc patronus 'heia,' inquit, 'Solii meus, quamquam suscepti officii onere pressaris, exseras volo in obsequium novi consulis veterem Musam votivum quippiam vel tumultuariis fidibus carminantem*). All Latin translations in this paper are my own. Harries proposes some possible motivations for the embassy: Harries, *Sidonius Apollinaris*, pp. 143–144. The idea of dismissing one's work as being the product of haste has an echo in Statius' *Silvae*: cf. Alex Hardie, *Statius and the Silvae. Poets, Patrons and Epideixis in the Greco-Roman World* (London, 1983), p. 219 (footnote 15). Hardie further suggests that Statius' poems are deliberately composed to look extemporised, and that this is done in order to reflect the contemporary trends in the performance of other epideictic poetry: Hardie, *Statius and the Silvae*, p. 77. Sidonius' collection is of similar nature to the *Silvae*, being an assortment of panegyrics and other occasional verses, and although his letters are separate from his verse, this creation of an impression of haste could once again be a reference back to the performative nature of the verse – though we lack evidence for it in the other panegyrics. What does set Sidonius apart from Statius in this respect is the latter's constant emphasis on patronage. Whereas the elder author openly acknowledges his function as professional poet on these occasions, Sidonius is, so to speak, a free agent, having acted so only on the request of other members of the senatorial classes.

3 There is acknowledgement of a not wholly sincere loyalty on Sidonius' part to varying degrees in the secondary literature. For example, Marc Reydellet takes an extreme view, to the extent that Sidonius experiences nothing but indifference towards his addressees, given that he produces almost the same level of indiscriminate praise for each of them: Marc Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la Littérature Latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Seville* (Paris, 1983),

Broadly speaking, the content of the poem is presented in a format to which Sidonius' audiences were by this point accustomed in verse panegyric: a mixture of semi-mythologised backstory detailing the emperor's upbringing, and narrative scenes featuring characters of mythological origin as well as allegorical figures, which in Sidonius' panegyrics are typically personifications of countries and cities.⁴ In both earlier panegyrics, the poem intermingles mythological sections with *realia*. *Carmen* 2, however, breaks with this pattern and presents two distinct sections, beginning with Anthemius' rise to power and ending with a scene in which Rome petitions Aurora, goddess of the dawn, to hand over Anthemius as the champion of the West.

My aim in this paper will thus be to look at the portrayal of this West-East relationship through the analysis of two passages within *Carmen* 2. The first is the *laudatio* of Constantinople, which falls in the first, straightforwardly panegyric section of the poem, while the second is the meeting between Rome and Aurora in the subsequent, mythological section. In so doing, I shall demonstrate that beneath the panegyric decoration and *amplificatio*, there is a current of unease and ambivalence surrounding the new, foreign emperor, and that, despite being required to paint Anthemius and his eastern origins in a positive light, it is in fact Rome and the West that are better served by Sidonius' eulogising.

Praising Constantinople (*Carm.* 2.30–37)

Situated right at the beginning of a poem totalling 546 hexameters, the *laudatio* of Constantinople occupies the comparatively mean space of just thirty-six lines, and passes with some speed through six different points of interest relating to the city's prestige. Sidonius begins with a typical *adlocutio*, immediately establishing Constantinople's position in the world as elevated: she is called *regina Orientis*, the queen of the East, the *columen sceptrorum*, the highest of

pp. 47–85. Andrew Gillett, in his assessment of the panegyric to Avitus (*Carm.* 7), emphasises the deceptive nature of Sidonius' panegyrics in general: Andrew Gillett, *Envoys and Political Communication in the Late Antique West, 411–533* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 84–112.

4 This is quite different from the conventions of prose panegyric, which for the most part is relatively 'unadorned'. Both styles of panegyric follow the rules for a *basilikos logos*, particularly as described by Menander Rhetor, though prose seems to do so more strictly. Verse panegyrics have the added influence of epic poetry in tone and register, which characterises a large part of the expression and imagery put to use. It is often these features which dominate as opposed to mere adherence to rhetorical conventions: cf. Sabine McCormack, "Imagery in Panegyrics," in *Latin Panegyric*, ed. Roger Rees (Oxford, 2012), p. 250.

rulers; she is in charge of an empire, and also capable of extending her empire (*imperii genetrix*). At the same time however, Sidonius is very careful to mark Constantinople out as being on equal footing with Rome: she is the Rome of her world (*orbis Roma tui*), and he defines the people of her empire as Romans of the Dawn, (*Eoo [...] Quiriti*), foreshadowing and linking this passage to the mythological remix which is to come later in the poem. As we shall come to see, Sidonius frames almost everything to do with Anthemius in typically Roman, which is to say Western, terms. Moreover, this is not plausibly explained by the argument that he still considers the East to be essentially Roman: the poet elsewhere makes it very clear that the empire is all the better for having two distinct parts.⁵

After the *adlocutio*, Sidonius goes on to describe the “citizens of Mars”, who inhabit the country of Thrace: their hardiness and propensity for war brought on by the cold and snowy climate, and their lives lived by the sword practically from cradle to grave.⁶ This passage is peculiar. In a section which is meant to be glorifying the city which gave birth to the new emperor, we find a description of a people who, though heroic and valiant, come across mostly as barbaric and uncultured, in stark contrast to Anthemius’ own illustrious education and erudition as described some hundred lines later.⁷ This description

5 See Sidonius, *Carmen* 2.27–29: “[...] your state will now, for the better, be a greater one, since it is thus made of two” ([...] *melius respublica vestra | nunc erit una magis, quae sic est facta duorum*).

6 Lynette Watson notes that Rhodope and Haemus are already associated with Mars, and that the section is thus ring-composed when Sidonius invokes the *cives Martis*: Lynette Watson, “*Sidonius Apollinaris’ Carmina 1 & 2: A Commentary*” (PhD diss., Royal Holloway, University of London, 1997), p. 57. Cf. Vergil, *Aeneid*, ed. Roger A. B. Mynors, *P. Vergili Maronis Opera* (Oxford, 1969), v. 3.13–16.

7 See Sidonius, *Carmen* 2.156–192. Sidonius takes pains to indicate how wide-ranging Anthemius’ knowledge of literature and learning is, including Greek philosophical works both well-known and more recondite, as well as a sound mastery of the Latin canon too. Watson, quoting both Sidonius, *Carmen* 23.233–40 and Corippus *In Laudem Iustini Minoris*, ed. Averil Cameron (London, 1976), 4.154–156 as evidence, discusses the probability of bilingualism being much more common and widespread in the East, so the enumeration of such a canon is not too far-fetched on Sidonius’ part: Watson, “*Carmina 1 & 2*,” p. 34. It is unsure whether this Greek canon was something with which Sidonius was himself familiar. The Latin authors quoted are certainly those found as illustrative examples in grammar books of the period: cf. Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley 1988) on the topic of regional peculiarities in texts studied under the *grammaticus*. Watson, furthermore, rightly notes that this forms part of Sidonius’ desire to underline the innate *Romanitas* (that is, “Latinness and Westernness”) of the recipients of his panegyrics: Watson, “*Carmina 1 & 2*,” p. 8. See also Lynette Watson, “Representing

can be paralleled with the description of the Huns given as a preamble to the battle of Serdica later on in the poem (*Carm.* 2. 243–269). Here too we find a people coming from cold regions (*Hyperboreis [...] vallibus*) who, aside from having an ungainly appearance, which occupies most of the description, are also instructed in the art of war and horse-riding from the moment they are taken from their mother's breast.⁸ Lynette Watson, following Martindale's suggestion in the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* that Anthemius held the post of *comes rei militaris per Thracias*, believes that this passage is a nod to Anthemius' association with that country.⁹ It remains odd, nevertheless, especially considering that there would have been ample opportunity to deal with this topic in full in the following sections where Sidonius discusses Anthemius' military prowess. There is thus no real need for the coded reference here. Instead, this should be read as forming part of the half-hearted praise of a city of which Sidonius has no love or possibly even knowledge. Sidonius continues the *laudatio* by describing Constantinople's position between Europe and Asia, how it enjoys a moderate temperature, since it is at the confluence of winds from two different directions. He extols the extent of the Eastern Empire's influence and power, which extends to Persia and India, both of which are subservient. Sidonius then spends a few lines on the topography of Constantinople itself. It is unlikely that Sidonius had ever actually been to Constantinople, though he may have had access to a text such

the Past, Redefining the Future: Sidonius Apollinaris' panegyrics of Avitus and Anthemius," in *The Propaganda of Power: The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, ed. Mary Whitby (Leiden, 1998), p. 192. Of course, this is likely as much for his own peace of mind or, in Annick Stoehr-Monjou's view, his hope for a *renovatio imperii*, as for that of his audience: Annick Stoehr-Monjou, "Sidoine Apollinaire et la fin d'un monde. Poétique d'éclat dans les panégyriques et leur préfaces," *Revue des études latines* 87 (2009), p. 217. Rigobert Günther similarly wishes to see that each panegyric expresses an unflagging hope on Sidonius' part, and that time and time again these hopes are dashed: Rigobert Günther, "Apollinaris Sidonius. Eine Untersuchung seiner drei Kaiserpanegyriken", in *Romanitas-Christianitas. Untersuchung zur Geschichte und Literatur der Römischen Kaiserzeit. Johannes Straub zum 70. Geburtstag am 18. Oktober 1982 gewidmet*, ed. Gerhard Wirth, Karl-Heinz Schwarte, and Johannes Heinrichs (Berlin, 1982), p. 660. What is perhaps more intriguing, is that Sidonius does something similar in the panegyric to Avitus, making the barbarian king Theodoric II look positively erudite: see Sidonius, *Carmen* 7.495–498: "Because of you (Avitus) the laws of Romulus please me, and my father ordered me to devote a little study to your words, so that Virgil's ancient book might soften my Gothic customs in sweet song" (*mihi Romula dudum | per te iura placent parvumque ediscere iussit | ad tua verba pater, docili quo prisca Maronis | carmine molliret Scythicos mihi pagina mores*).

8 See Sidonius, *Carmen* 2.255–7, 262–6.

9 Watson, "Carmina 1 & 2," p. 58.

as the *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae*, or heard about it through correspondence. That said, the representation of an aerial view of the city is not uncommon in Latin literature, particularly in the work of Sidonius' near-contemporary authors, Claudian and Rutilius Namatianus.¹⁰ However, while in other late Latin poetry the emphasis is laid upon the splendour of the city, here Sidonius singles out only two features: the city walls, and the building projects which required land to be reclaimed from the sea. Neither is treated with the same reverence and gilded imagery as either the representations of Rome which inspire this trope, or the later description of Aurora's palace in the allegorical scene. In fact, both the walls and the building projects are described in the vaguest possible terms. This once again is peculiar, given that there were many impressive structures which had been erected by the time of the panegyric's production. Nevertheless, no churches or palaces are mentioned at all, simply a generic description of land reclamation.¹¹ Furthermore, Sidonius emphasises the fact that this was accomplished using *Dicarcheae...pulvis harenae*, the red sand used in Roman construction for centuries, which had been taken to Constantinople. Whether any *puteolanum* was actually taken to Constantinople is a matter of little importance. What is of more interest is that Sidonius insists upon this rather mundane fact, a fact which once again emphasises a link to, and reliance upon, Rome and the West.¹² His distaste is made further evident when he notes how the walls make the city feel narrower when it is populated with people: "You expand your enormous city with large walls, which, however, the people make narrow" (*porrigis ingentem spatiosis moenibus urbem, | quam tamen angustam populus facit*).¹³ Finally, Sidonius ends this section with a comment about the division of the empire, to which we shall return presently. In the meantime, let us examine the mythological reinterpretation of this *laudatio*.

10 Michael Roberts, "Rome Personified, Rome Epitomized: Representations of Rome in the Poetry of the Early Fifth Century," *American Journal of Philology* 122 (2001), 533–565.

11 Cf., for example, Cyril Mango, *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IV^e–VII^e siècles)* (Paris, 1985).

12 In poetry, the adjective *Dicarcheus* is found chiefly, once again, in the *Silvae* of Statius, but also the *Punica* of Silius Italicus. In Statius it is also used metaphorically to refer to the town of Puteoli, but is generally in close proximity to sections which deal with architectural matters. Equally in Statius, it is used in conjunction with other toponymic adjectives of mythological origin (e.g. *Parthenopeus* for Naples), which thus serve to emphasize the indigenous Italian nature of the objects or people being described. A similar approach is found in Silius Italicus, who also resorts to archaic names such as *Oenotria* for Italy: cf. Sidonius' own use of this later on, in Sidonius, *Carmen* 2.

13 See Sidonius, *Carmen* 2.56–57.

Domus Aurorae (Carm. 2.407–523): Variations on a Theme?

The mythological narrative starts almost afresh with a second, new invocation to Paeon Apollo, a notable device not employed in previous panegyrics.¹⁴ Contrary also to the two previous works, which both involve a variation on the epic *concilium deorum*, the mythological content of the panegyric to Anthemius takes place in a succession of scenes where the dialoguing participants are limited to two, and the exchanges reduced to an almost private setting. Thus we find Oenotria, the personification of ancient Italy, petitioning the river Tiber, who in turn petitions the goddess Roma to seek aid from Aurora, the goddess of the dawn. This in itself shows a marked change in tone and intention on Sidonius' part when compared to the panegyrics to Avitus and Majorianus. No longer is the hope and saviour of the empire provided with the divine assent of Jupiter, as it is in the panegyric to Avitus, but rather it is an agreement brokered between comparatively second-rate divinities. It is indeed more similar to the mythological episode of the panegyric to Majorianus, in which Africa, having thrown herself at Roma's feet, begs the goddess for Majorianus to avenge her against the Vandals. Yet the petition is no longer quite as direct as in that panegyric, for, as noted, there are several rungs of hierarchy to be climbed before the request initiated by Oenotria reaches Aurora in the East. Nor, indeed, is the presentation quite so melodramatic. The resultant exchange between the goddesses in the present panegyric is terse and sober, bringing the luxury of the East, in the person of Aurora, into contrast with the business-like aspect of Roma.

As much as the mythological content of a panegyric is intended to be an *amplificatio* of real-world qualities, I disagree with Madeleine Bonjour's assessment that its only purpose is to extend what would otherwise be a rather short offering.¹⁵ Instead, Sidonius seems to use these set-pieces to convey information which would be difficult to put across without causing a political faux-pas in straight panegyric. Following this line of thought, the presentation of the Aurora-Roma exchange can take on quite a different meaning.

As with the non-panegyric section, Sidonius affords only a short description of Aurora's realm, totalling a meagre 29 lines of the 216 dedicated to the

14 It is, however, not unknown in epic poetry. For example, Virgil has a second invocation to the muse Erato near the beginning of the seventh book of the *Aeneid* (7.37–44). Its employment here is not unlike Sidonius' invocation to Apollo: it heralds the second part of the poem, with a shift of focus onto – in Virgil's case – the Italian episodes of Aeneas' journey and ultimate destiny.

15 Madeleine Bonjour, "Personnification, allégorie, et prosopopée dans les *Panégryriques* de Sidoine Apollinaire," *Vichiana* (N.S.) 11 (1982), 5–17.

mythological *narratio*. So much so, then, for *amplificatio*. The country is located somewhere near India, and is a place of luxury, a *locus amoenus* taken to the extreme: it is a land of eternal spring where roses cover the countryside, and Sidonius further evokes the fragrances and image of exotic plants and flowers, such as lilies, cinnamon, violets, and myrrh.¹⁶ Aurora's house is made of shining metal decorated with gems. There is at least one point of intersection with the description of Constantinople in Aurora's description: she wears a double girdle (*pectora bis cingunt zonae*, *Carm.* 2.429) which could allude to the double walls of Constantinople. Other than that, Sidonius departs from any further resemblance.

Seated on a throne, Aurora herself is once again referred to as *regina*. She is accompanied by Night, fleeing at her one side, and Light, just beginning to be seen at the other. In this way, she forms a parallel to the description of Oenotria, who is described as being accompanied by *Ubertas* (Abundance) and *Vindemia* (the Harvest). This parallel becomes clearer when one notices the chiasmic arrangement of the descriptions. We begin with Oenotria accompanied by her two assistants, pass through two single descriptions of the Tiber and Roma, before ending once again with the trinity of Aurora and her companions. The chiasmic arrangement further aids the contrasting of their two natures: Oenotria is expressly described as being old: "The old one entered, rather slowly, and holding the vine-covered head of the staff, bent her venerable limbs in turn over the (stick of) elm." (*segnior incedit senior venerandaque membra | viticomam retinens baculi vice flectit ad ulmum*, *Carm.* 2.327–8). Yet even so (*sed tamen*) she is still supported and accompanied by Abundance and the Harvest. In contrast, Aurora, by virtue of her nature as goddess of the dawn and new things, only has two fleeting companions: Night, who has already left her, and Light, who has yet to join her.

The Two Cities Meet

The outcomes of the two episodes are subtly different, especially if we are to continue to treat them, as Sidonius seems to do, as two distinct entities.¹⁷ If

16 There is an Eden-esque quality to this description, a comparison which is borne out by intertextual borrowings from this episode in the *Laudes Dei* of Dracontius and subsequently the *Aletheia* of Claudius Marius Victorius: Mark Lewis Tizzoni, "Dracontius and the Wider World. Cultural and Intellectual Interconnectedness in Late Fifth-Century North Africa," *Networks and Neighbours* 2/1 (2014), 108–110.

17 Cf. the second invocation at the start of the mythological narrative discussed above.

we are to take the two sections as being fundamentally different in strategy – straightforward panegyric as representing the political reality, or something approaching it,¹⁸ and the mythological-allegorical section as an idealised world on Sidonius’ part – then a sharp contrast exists between the real and the imagined. On the one hand Sidonius concludes the *laudatio* of Constantinople with the image of a scale. The East is described as taking up the weight of the West: “The parts of the scale are in agreement; since you take up our weight, you have made [us] equal” (*concordat lancis partes; dum pondera nostra | suscipis, aequasti [...]*, *Carm.* 2.66–7). This image, which not only further emphasises a duality between the two halves of the Empire already indicated in the previous line (*valeat divisio regni*, ‘let the division of the empire remain strong’), a division which Sidonius is seemingly happy to have continue (*valeat*); though they may be on good terms (*concordat*), they are still separated. By contrast, the outcome of Rome’s visit to Aurora is that the twin parts of the empire are joined (*geminas iunxit Concordia partes*) – though this is somewhat contradictory as Aurora refers to Roma as *sancta parens* at 2.516.

The nuances of the two sections are also telling. In the first part it is made clear that Anthemius comes with the backing of Leo, and thus the Eastern Empire – the implication, as exemplified by the image of the scale, is that the East is picking up the slack of the West, but still keeping it as its own entity. In the mythological scene, however, Roma provides a whole catalogue of historical concessions which she had made for the East, and indicates that it is as some sort of retribution for these deeds that Aurora should grant her Anthemius. The result of this is a *joining* of two parts which are essentially the same (*geminas [...] partes*), but a joining which is effected by a mutual feeling of harmony, as opposed to any physical working together. Once again, this contrasts with the panegyric to Majorianus, where Africa and Roma are shown to work together physically to create unity.¹⁹ Lynette Watson, in her commentary on the poem, notes that “The mythological framework [...] disguises the fact

18 Heinz Hofmann argues that one should not even expect any similarity between historical facts and the version presented by the narrator of a panegyric, and moreover that the audience would not really expect there to be any either – presumably understanding panegyric, as it was, to be a mode of expression with all its conventions: Heinz Hofmann, “Überlegungen zu einer Theorie der nichtchristlichen Epik der lateinischen Spätantike,” *Philologus* 132/1 (1988), 101–159.

19 See Sidonius, *Carmen* 7.367–9: “With such a speech, and with the words of the goddess, the council was done and on account of the metal being pliable, the sisters drew golden threads” (*Tali sermone peractum | concilium verbisque deae famulante metallo | aurea concordēs traxerunt fila sorores*).

that the west probably had little influence on the nomination [...] and therefore restores some sense of initiative to Rome [...]”.²⁰

Consequently, the panegyric aims to depict a Rome that is in many ways superior to its eastern counterpart, even if this is not in reality the case. Sidonius is aware that Rome forms part of the old world and that the Eastern Empire is probably the way forward – this much is clear from both the choice of Aurora, the new, rising sun, to represent the East in place of a personified Constantinople, and from Roma’s acknowledgement of her old age.²¹ He nevertheless ensures that the starring role of the panegyric is Roma, and that the qualities which make Anthemius a suitable candidate are essentially expressed in relation to Roman virtues. Thus he insists upon Anthemius being well versed in Greek *and* Latin literature. Constantinople is described in only vague terms, and the luxurious aspects of Aurora’s country are played up. Aurora herself tells Roma not to be so violent, perhaps underlining an apparent mistrust in East-West politics:

*duc age, sancta parens, quamquam mihi maximus usus
invicti summique ducis, dum mitior exstes,
et non disiunctas melius moderemur habenas.*

Carm. 2.516–518

Take him away then, sacred parent – even though this unconquered and greatest leader is of the greatest use to me – take him away, provided that you are more moderate, and we guide the reins better together.

Roma is depicted as a warrior woman, as always, active and powerful. Even if the dedicatee changes, Roma, and her ability either to make do with, or to improve her situation, is always the common factor.

Although, as mentioned previously, Reydellet argues for a thoroughly indifferent Sidonius, it would be more prudent to rather err on the side of caution and read Sidonius’ reactions as displaying an ambivalence regarding both the emperors he is praising, as well as the desired future of the Western Empire.²² After all, there is some, not insignificant material reward for Sidonius in the production of these panegyrics, namely the dedication of a statue in the forum

²⁰ Watson, “*Carmina* 1 & 2,” p. 177.

²¹ E.g. Sidonius, *Carmen* 2.451–2: “I gave this whole world to you, and am I not so deserving that you look upon my old age?” (*Totum hunc tibi cessimus axem, | et nec sic mereor nostram ut tueare senectam?*)

²² Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine*. pp. 47–85.

in the manner of his spiritual predecessor, Claudian, and his appointment as *praefectus urbi* in 469, both of which could not have been merited if the panegyrics were borne out of pure indifference. Indeed, this ambivalence as to the future of Rome and the Western Empire is perhaps most succinctly expressed in the ambiguity of the last lines of the poem: “Go now as one happy, father of the country, and may you, who are about to enfetter new captives, while the time is auspicious, release old ones.” (*perge, pater patriae, felix atque omine fausto | captivos vincture novos absolve vetustos. Carm. 2.547–548*).

Loyen suggests that these lines are the precursor to Anthemius’ plans against the Vandals, but this plan does not get any airing elsewhere in the panegyric.²³ The Vandals are still present, but the preoccupation with liberating Africa is mainly the concern of the panegyric to Majorianus. Rather, given that the previous lines make reference to a ritual in which slaves were freed on the days when the consulate was assumed, the force of the last lines seems more to indicate an uncertainty as to who shall become the new slaves in their place.²⁴

Conclusion

For all his protestations about the hastiness of its composition, Sidonius’ poem was evidently a success with his intended audience – his appointment to the position of *praefectus urbi* is testament enough to this. The appointment, however, was not to last long, for he resigned upon being made to judge the trial of his friend Arvandus, who had been accused of treason against the emperor.²⁵ Anthemius’ popularity, too, waned in equally short measure, and the easterner – eventually being referred to disparagingly as *Graeculus*, “that Greek” or simply *Graecus imperator* –²⁶ soon made many enemies among the senatorial classes of both Italy and Gaul, including his new son-in-law Ricimer.²⁷

23 Loyen, *Poèmes*, p. 175 (footnote 83).

24 Cf. Loyen, *Poèmes*, p. 175 (footnote 82).

25 Sidonius does not write about his activities as *praefectus urbi*, leading to some uncertainty about how long he was actually in the position. Harries suggests that he held the post for a year, leaving in 469: Harries, *Sidonius Apollinaris*, pp. 150–151. Henning is more conservative and proposes that he may have left the position as early as May of 468, though maintaining that it is equally possible that he remained until the next year: Henning, *Periclitans res publica*, p. 89.

26 For *Graeculus*, see Ennodius, *Vita Epiphani* 55. For *Graecus imperator*, see Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epistula* 1.7 (to the Visigothic king Euric).

27 See Henning, *Periclitans res publica*, pp. 42–46 for a general biography of Anthemius, and pp. 154–169, for an analysis of the relations between the emperor and the senatorial

Sidonius' ambivalence towards this incursion of the East into western politics, and probably also the ambivalence of the *viri clarissimi* who would later bring about Anthemius' downfall, is made clear enough in his panegyric. Decorum and the form of panegyric demanded that he present a flattering picture of the emperor and his motherland, but by failing to provide anything more substantial than golden platitudes in the encomium of Constantinople, and constantly playing the East off against the West within the mythological narrative, Sidonius manages to proclaim Rome and *Romanitas* as the victor, to the detriment of its upstart counterpart in the East.

aristocracy in Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Dalmatia, as well as his relations with the military and the Church. For an overview of the extant sources for the life of Anthemius and his murder at the hands of Ricimer and Gundobad, see also Ralph W. Mathisen, "Anthemius (12 April 467–11 July 472 AD)," in <http://www.luc.edu/roman-emperors/anthemiu.htm> (accessed August 2014). For a discussion of weakening relations, see Loyer, *Recherches historiques*, p. 95.

L'identité romaine est-elle exclusive à Constantinople? Dichotomie entre Byzance et les Balkans à l'époque médiobyzantine (VI^e–XII^e siècles)

Vincent Tremblay

Introduction*

Dans les dernières décennies, les sources non-écrites ont permis aux historiens de raviver la discussion savante reliée à la notion de frontière dans l'espace balkanique. Grâce à d'heureuses collaborations entre les historiens, les sigillographistes, les numismates et les archéologues, les spécialistes ont éclairé des pans entiers de l'histoire des Balkans inaccessibles par le biais des écrits byzantins ayant survécu jusqu'à aujourd'hui. C'est le cas, par exemple, des études portant sur l'*Illyricum* byzantin pendant les migrations avaro-slaves ainsi qu'à l'espace balkanique entre le X^e et le XII^e siècle. Cela dit, cette riche discussion, loin de se limiter à l'analyse de nouvelles sources, rejoint également l'arène historiographique, où les chercheurs sont invités à réfléchir sur les relations entre le centre et la périphérie, les concepts d'État et d'empire, la question identitaire et la notion de frontière.

Cet article souhaite s'insérer dans la réflexion historiographique qui continue d'occuper une place privilégiée dans les récentes publications byzantines, à savoir la représentation de l'Autre, l'ethnographie et les problèmes reliés à l'identité. Nous soutiendrons l'idée que la limite entre romanité et espace barbare, fixée au Danube, selon ce qu'écrivent certains auteurs byzantins (et certains historiens), mérite un examen plus attentif. En effet, entre le VI^e et le XIII^e siècle, il semble qu'un rétrécissement progressif de la perception

* Nous avons grandement bénéficié de l'expertise de plusieurs spécialistes qui ont attentivement révisé cet article. En plus de remercier les correcteurs anonymes, nous souhaitons mentionner le Prof. Dr. Marc Lauxtermann (Exeter College, Oxford) pour ses précieux commentaires sur Procope et sa lecture critique du texte, ainsi que le Prof. Dr. Philippe Genequand (Université de Montréal) pour ses nombreux commentaires et révisions ainsi que son support inconditionnel pendant la totalité du processus d'édition.

géographique de l'empire apparaisse dans les sources écrites. En conséquence, l'image que se font les Constantinopolitains du reste de monde se polarise davantage, tandis qu'on limite l'étendue de la romanité à un espace de plus en plus restreint, à savoir la capitale byzantine.

D'emblée, l'empire hérite, au VI^e siècle, d'un niveau d'organisation et d'urbanisation élevé, alors que certaines régions, comme la Syrie et la Palestine connaissent, sous Justinien, un essor économique¹. Le tissu urbain et l'uniformité sociale, culturelle, voire ethnique, crée l'impression que l'Empire byzantin constitue un large bloc (relativement) uni et homogène². Toutefois, à l'autre bout du spectre chronologique, à savoir au tournant du XIII^e siècle, ce sentiment d'unité au sein d'un même empire, visible par l'utilisation d'un langage commun et le partage d'une culture, érudite et urbaine, similaire, ne se rencontre plus. Au contraire, les auteurs constantinopolitains articulent l'identité romaine en des termes de plus en plus exclusifs. En conséquence, on perçoit le provincial, chrétien orthodoxe ou non, presque aussi négativement que le barbare qui n'est pas soumis à Byzance. Plus précisément, on place le provincial, sur une échelle civilisationnelle, beaucoup plus près du barbare que du sommet de l'échelle, occupée par le « Romain » qui réside à Constantinople. La capitale repose sur un piédestal tel qu'elle seule permet d'anoblir la condition et d'amener la vertu.

L'importance démesurée accordée à la capitale et la représentation défavorable de tout ce qui n'est pas constantinopolitain invitent le chercheur à s'interroger sur la nature même de l'Empire byzantin tel qu'il est représenté par ses élites savantes. Il semble que la disparition d'une culture érudite commune aux élites urbaines et l'essor de la supériorité de la capitale byzantine ait causé l'insularité de la capitale dans des Balkans envahis par les Slaves, les Avars et les Bulgares³. Le sentiment de supériorité de la Nouvelle Rome, renforcé par la croyance que la ville, qui connaît plusieurs sièges, est imprenable, aurait invité les Constantinopolitains à se sentir supérieurs non seulement

1 Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 614–615.

2 Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformation of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 96–97.

3 Sur la question du déclin des villes byzantines dans la péninsule balkanique, voir John Haldon, « The Idea of the Town in the Byzantine Empire, » dans *The Idea and Ideal of the Town Between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, éd. Bryan Ward-Perkins et Gian Petro Broglio (Leyde, 1999), pp. 1–23.

vis-à-vis des barbares, mais également des provinciaux byzantins⁴. L'étude qui suit illustre ce phénomène en comparant la perception constantinopolitaine du barbare à l'extérieur de l'orbite de Byzance et du Byzantin vivant à l'intérieur des limites de l'empire.

Frontières réelles ou perçues?

La notion de frontière, tout comme celle d'État, de richesse, de loi et d'empire, est à la fois relative et malléable. Elle dépend à la fois de la perception géographique des auteurs médiévaux, de la vision territoriale des décideurs et de la définition que se font les historiens, dont le concept de frontière est largement hérité de la genèse des États-nations⁵. Tentant de dépasser ces problèmes, Javier Arce propose une étude portant sur la notion de frontière dans un texte anonyme du IV^e siècle⁶. M. Arce affirme en citant l'auteur du *De Rebus Bellicis* que celui-ci jugeait nécessaire pour la *res publica* de régler une fois pour toutes les problèmes des frontières romaines⁷. Pour ce faire, l'Anonyme propose de créer une ligne continue de *castella* situés à chaque 1000 pieds romains et reliés par un mur solide et des tours de garde⁸. En tenant de tels propos, le *De Rebus Bellicis* propose un point de vue hétérodoxe, puisqu'il contredit le constat de plusieurs historiens vis-à-vis de la constitution du *limes*. En général, on s'entend pour considérer le *limes* comme une série de districts frontaliers, possédant des fonctions variées, mais sans nécessairement avoir une vocation strictement défensive, ni ne constituant une ligne impénétrable, stratégiquement réfléchie, entre entités politiques⁹. Au contraire, le *limes*, perméable et

4 Voir Paul Magdalino, « Constantinople and the Outsider World, » dans *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider, Papers from the Thirty-second Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, éd. Dion Smythe (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 149–162.

5 Selon Walter Pohl, il s'agit de la base du problème, puisque deux conceptions nées durant les XIX^e et XX^e siècles ont été transposées dans le passé. Voir Walter Pohl, « The Transformation of Frontiers, » dans *The Transformation of Frontiers: From Late Antiquity to the Carolingians*, éd. Walter Pohl, Ian Wood, et Helmut Reimitz (Leiden, 2001), p. 248.

6 *De Rebus Bellicis*, éd. Robert I. Ireland (Leyde, 1984), p. 198.

7 Ces mêmes frontières, écrit Ammien Marcellin, subissaient une pression constante des Alamans, des Sarmates, des Pictes, des Saxons, des Scots et des tribus maures. Voir Ammien Marcellin, *Res Gestae*, éd. et trad. John Carew Rolfe (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), 26.4.5; John Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (Londres, 1989), pp. 66–73.

8 *De Rebus Bellicis*, 20.

9 Javier Arce, « Frontiers of the Late Roman Empire, » dans *The Transformation of Frontiers*, p. 7.

permettant le commerce avec le monde extérieur, ne sépare pas de manière absolue de larges blocs culturels en constante concurrence. Il est probable que l'Anonyme, contrairement à ce qu'il écrit, en est parfaitement conscient, puisqu'il recommande la création d'une « vraie » frontière, qui séparerait Rome de l'espace barbare.

L'Anonyme propose néanmoins un cas de figure pertinent en sous-entendant l'existence de deux types de frontières, l'une symbolique, l'autre réelle (physique). D'une part, Rome n'aurait pas de limites : il n'importerait pas de barricader l'empire, puisque celui-ci est destiné à s'accroître éternellement et, finalement, à régner sur l'*oikoumenè*. D'autre part, pour reprendre les lignes du *De Rebus Bellicis*, la sauvegarde de l'Empire romain, constamment harcelé au nord, à l'est et au sud, doit passer par son retranchement derrière de solides lignes de défenses. En conséquence, les considérations géopolitiques réelles contredisent l'image œcuménique de l'empire que dessinent les écrits de nature rhétorique ou panégyriques. Cette dichotomie qu'illustre le *De Rebus Bellicis* se transpose également dans la documentation byzantine plus tardive, problème que reprend à son compte M. Paul Stephenson dans une étude terminologique de la frontière.

Constantinople face aux *barbaroi*

En effet, M. Stephenson, qui se prononce sur la stratégie frontalière de l'Empire byzantin, affirme que si les auteurs byzantins de l'Antiquité tardive et de l'époque médiobyzantine utilisent des expressions désignant « frontière », ils hésitent à fournir une définition. Par exemple, Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, dans le *De Administrando Imperio*, avance trois termes¹⁰. Le premier, σύνορος, équivaldrait à l'expression « en bordure de », le second, ἄκρα, pourrait se traduire par « extrémité » ou « limite », tandis que le troisième, ὄρισμός, consisterait en une bordure linéaire fixe généralement précisée par des bornes en pierre¹¹.

À l'instar de Constantin VII, il est mentionné dans la *Souda* que « les zones aux extrémités des terres sont appelées *eschatia* (ἐσχαιά), lesquelles sont

10 Paul Stephenson, « The Byzantine Frontier at the Lower Danube in the Late Tenth and Eleventh Centuries, » dans *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700–1700*, éd. Daniel Power et Naomi Standen (Londres, 1996), p. 81. Stephenson exclut de son article le terme κλεισοῦρα, qui renvoie aux commanderies militaires chargées de défendre des points précis sur les frontières.

11 Stephenson, « The Byzantine Frontier, » p. 81.

délimités par une montagne ou une mer »¹². Cette conception de la frontière qu'illustre *Souda* se fait également l'écho des traités militaires rédigés à la même époque¹³. Par exemple, l'auteur anonyme du Βιβλίον τακτικόν utilise indistinctement « ἄκρα » pour se référer aux bordures d'une fortification et aux limites de l'empire¹⁴. L'usage fréquent de « ἄκρα » suggère que les Byzantins (du moins les stratèges et les tacticiens) conceptualisent la frontière de manière spatiale. En corolaire, plusieurs auteurs byzantins tiennent leur empire pour un espace politique fini, où les limites de la souveraineté sont cernées par des lignes fixes, tantôt définies par des frontières naturelles, tantôt par des bornes en pierres (ὁροθεσία)¹⁵. En somme, M. Stephenson conclut : « perhaps the most interesting perceived quality of a frontier in Byzantine literature is that it was marginal and peripheral »¹⁶.

Sur le plan rhétorique, la frontière définit les confins de l'*oikouménè* et marque la rupture entre l'espace civilisé et la barbarie. Par leur éducation, accomplie pour la plupart à Constantinople, les auteurs byzantins reprennent cette vision dualiste du monde lorsqu'ils décrivent les barbares comme des étrangers non civilisés, comme l'illustre le *topos* classique déjà présent dans les sources athéniennes du v^e siècle av. J.-C. Par exemple, Michel Psellos, qui calque la frontière entre Romains et barbares sur le Danube, écrit :

Les ravins, les montagnes et les rivières formaient des frontières naturelles, au même titre que les villes et les forteresses construites par les hommes. Le barbare, chevauchant aussi loin que celles-ci, lorsqu'il les voyait, aussitôt était frappé de stupeur et n'avait plus le courage de continuer son chemin. [...] Mais lorsque cette barrière s'écroule, toute la partie opposée s'avance vers nous au même titre qu'un raz-de-marée. Maintenant, la séparation entre romanité et barbarie n'est plus: nous semblons vivre indistinctement et pêle-mêle. À cause de cela, les barbares combattent désormais avec nous, tant sur l'Euphrate que sur le Danube¹⁷.

12 *Suida Lexicon*, éd. Ada Adler (Leipzig, 1971), 1.950, p. 88.

13 Stephenson, « The Byzantine Frontier, » p. 81. Stephenson explique à cet effet que les deux types de documents reprennent le concept de frontière tel qu'il était déjà explicité dans les écrits du III^e siècle de notre ère.

14 Voir *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*, éd. George T. Dennis (Washington, D.C., 1985), pp. 254, 264, 302; Stephenson, « The Byzantine Frontier, » p. 81.

15 Ibid., p. 82.

16 Ibid.

17 Voir Michael Psellos, *Scripta Minora II*, éd. Édouard Kurtz et Francis Drexler, 2 vols (Milan, 1941), 207, 2:239: «Τὰ δὲ ἦν φυσικὰ μὲν, φάραγγες καὶ ὄρη καὶ ποταμοί, χειροποίητα δέ, πόλεις

Dans ce passage, Michel Psellos reprend une idée déjà présente dans les sources romaines. Ainsi, dans les *Res Gestae*, la limite de l'empire romain est fixée au Danube¹⁸. Similairement, l'historien Tacite considère le Danube comme le commencement du monde non civilisé¹⁹. Plusieurs siècles plus tard, Procope de Césarée définit la frontière comme une limite stable qui sépare la civilisation de l'espace barbare. Il expose, dans un passage traitant vraisemblablement du mur d'Hadrien, l'aboutissement d'un processus de réflexion amorcé dès l'*Histoire auguste*, qui stipule que le mur mythique constitue non seulement une barrière entre Rome et le monde extérieur, mais aussi entre ordre et chaos²⁰. Il écrit :

Sur cette île de Brittia, les hommes de jadis ont construit un long mur, séparant [en deux] une grande part de celle-ci, et l'air et le sol et tout le reste est différent des deux côtés. Car à l'est du mur, l'air est sain, change au gré des saisons, et est modérément chaud en été et froid en hiver [...] Mais de l'autre côté tout est l'opposé de cela, de sorte qu'il est impossible pour un homme de vivre là pour plus d'une demi-heure, puisque les vipères et les innombrables serpents et toute sorte de bêtes sauvages occupent la place et la font siennes; et le plus étonnant de tous, ceux qui vivent là-bas disent que si un homme traverse le mur et va de l'autre côté, il meurt aussitôt, incapable d'endurer la nature pestilentielle de l'air là-bas²¹.

καὶ φρούρια. Καὶ ὁ γε βάρβαρος μέχρι τούτων τὸν ἵππον ἐλαύνων ἰδὼν εὐθὺς ἐπέιχε τὸν χαλινὸν καὶ οὐκ ἐθάρρει τὴν εἴσοδον. [...] ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ τοιαύτη ἐρράγη περιβολή, ὥσπερ τι ποτάμιον ἡμῖν ἢ ἀντίθετος μερὶς ἅπασα. Καὶ νῦν οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδαμοῦ τὸ διορίζον τὸ Ῥωμαϊκὸν καὶ τὸ βάρβαρον, ἀλλὰ δοκοῦμεν ἀναμῖξ καὶ συγκεχυμένως οἰκεῖν. Διὰ τοῦτο ἀμφισβητοῦσιν ἡμῖν νῦν μὲν τῷ πρὸς τῷ Εὐφράτῃ πολέμῳ, νῦν δὲ τῷ πρὸς τῷ Ἰστροῦ." Paul Stephenson, « The Balkan Frontier in the Year 1000, » dans *Byzantium in the Year 1000*, éd. Paul Magdalino (Leiden, 2003), p. 109.

18 *Res gestae divi Augusti/Hauts faits du divin Auguste*, éd. et trad. John Scheid (Paris, 2007), 30, p. 22; Susan P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley, 2002), p. 111.

19 Tacite, *Vie d'Agricola/La Germanie*, trad. Jacques Perret (Paris, 2010), 1, p. 3.

20 Michael E. Jones, « Geographical-Psychological Frontiers, » dans *Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, éd. Hagith S. Sivan et Ralph W. Mathisen (Aldershot, 1996), p. 55.

21 Voir Procope de Césarée, *De bellis*, éd. Jakob Haury et Gerhard Wirth (Leipzig, 1962), 2.8.42–46, pp. 596–597: "Ἐν ταύτῃ δὲ τῇ Βριττίᾳ, νήσῳ τεῖχος ἐδείμαντο μακρὸν οἱ πάλοι ἀνθρώποι, δίχα τέμνον αὐτῆς πολλήν τινα μοῖραν. Τοῦ δὲ τείχους ὁ τε ἀήρ καὶ ἡ γῆ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα οὐχ ὁμοίως ἐφ' ἐκάτερά ἐστι. Τὰ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ τείχους πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον εὐεξία τε ἀέρων ἐστὶ συμμεταβαλλομένη ταῖς ὥραις, θέρους μὲν μετρίως ἀλεεινὴ, ψυχρινὴ δὲ χειμῶνος. [...] Πρὸς δύνοντα δὲ πᾶν τούναντίον, ὥστε ἀμέλει ἀνθρώρῳ μὲν οὐδὲ ἡμιώριον δυνατόν ἐστιν ἐνταῦθα βιώσιναι, ἔχισ δὲ καὶ ὅφεις ἀνάρητοι καὶ ἄλλων θηρίων παντοδαπὰ γένη διακεκλήρωται

Ce passage coloré, chez Procope, cède le pas à des considérations plus immédiates et à des exemples plus pragmatiques et moins mythiques. Par exemple, l'auteur distingue nettement la « terre des Romains » (Ῥωμαίων γῆ) des zones situées hors des frontières, à l'est et au nord-est²². Par « terre des Romains », Procope désigne l'empire dans sa totalité, comme l'illustre l'histoire d'un certain Paul, transfuge devenu interprète de Chrosoès, qui affirme provenir de la « terre des Romains »²³.

En outre, Procope utilise les termes *horia* et *eschatiai* pour définir les limites de la domination romaine. Le premier terme, employé en grec classique pour désigner les bornes sacrées qui délimitent les domaines patrimoniaux et également la frontière des cités, est repris par l'auteur pour désigner les bordures des grands ensembles politiques, comme l'empire sassanide²⁴. Ces bordures, chez Procope, peuvent prendre la forme d'une ligne de terrain comprise entre deux rangées de bourgades ou de forteresses²⁵, ou bien constituer des frontières naturelles²⁶.

Procope propose une lecture similaire des frontières occidentales. En effet, l'historien affirme que les limites de l'empire, à l'ouest, sont fixées précisément sur le Rhône et sur le Rhin. Nonobstant l'occupation du territoire par les tribus germaniques, « cette zone n'a aucunement cessé d'appartenir à la *Romania*, de relever de la souveraineté de l'empereur et de la compétence des fonctionnaires du gouvernement »²⁷. Ainsi il existe, selon MM. Arrignon et Duneau, « à l'intérieur des anciennes limites de l'empire, des royautes – ainsi celles des Francs – sur lesquelles le gouvernement de Constantinople ne revendique en principe que l'hégémonie »²⁸. Procope lui-même le note et écrit que puisque

τὸν χώρον ἐκεῖνον. Καὶ τὸ δὴ παραλογώτατον, οἱ ἐπιχώριοι λέγουσιν ὡς, εἴ τις ἄνθρωπος τὸ τεῖχος ἀμείψας ἐπὶ θάτερα ἴοι, εὐθυωρὸν θνήσκει, τὸ λοιμῶδες τῶν ἐκεῖνη ἀέρων ὡς ἥμιστα φέρων.”
Voir aussi Jones, « Geographical-Psychological Frontiers, » p. 54.

22 J.-P. Arrignon et J.-F. Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » dans *Geographica Byzantina*, éd. Hélène Ahrweiler (Paris, 1981), p. 19.

23 Arrignon et Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » p. 19; Procope, *De bellis* 2.7.23. L'inverse est aussi vrai en ce qui à trait à la Περσῶν γῆ: Procope, *De bellis* 2.10.17.

24 Arrignon et Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » p. 20.

25 Par exemple, lorsque Procope affirme que « depuis la ville d'Axoum jusqu'aux ὄρια de la puissance romaine du côté de l'Égypte, il n'y a pas d'autres villes que celle que l'on nomme Éléphantine »: Arrignon et Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » p. 20. Voir aussi Procope, *De bellis* 1.19.1.

26 Par exemple, les fleuves Phase/Boas et Euphrate qui séparent les empires romain et perse. Voir Procope, *De bellis*, 2.6 et 8.2.

27 Arrignon et Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » p. 23.

28 Arrignon et Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » p. 23.

les Romains ont délégué le pouvoir aux souverains germaniques établis sur la « terre des Romains », ces derniers, par traité, participent la romanité. Il s'agit d'une distinction importante, puisque tous les Germains vivant au-delà du Rhin et n'ayant jamais pris pied sur le sol de l'empire habitent à l'extérieur de la *romanitas* en vertu de leur positionnement vis-à-vis du fleuve.

En somme, parallèlement à la frontière idéologique, qui sépare la Romanie du reste du monde, l'auteur ajoute une frontière matérialisée dans l'espace, comme le montre l'usage de termes *horia* et *eschatiai*, ainsi que de repères géographiques précis, comme un fleuve, une montagne ou un tissu de fortifications linéaires. De cette façon, Procope s'inscrit dans une tradition byzantine plus large et considère la frontière comme une chose distante, mais concrète, tangible et conceptualisée, qui sépare l'Empire romain de l'élément barbare.

Une rhétorique similaire est déployée dans le *De Administrando Imperio* de Constantin VII Porphyrogénète. L'empereur distingue, en vertu de la situation géographique des différents peuples, trois degrés de contrôle que les Byzantins exercent sur ces mêmes peuples. Selon MM. Arrignon et Duneau, les trois degrés d'hégémonie byzantine apparaissent à partir du vocabulaire utilisé par Constantin VII pour délimiter les différentes puissances politiques et leur rapport avec Byzance. Ainsi, les termes (ὄροθεσία, σύνορος, ἄκρα et κλεισοῦρα) délimitent les territoires directement sous contrôle politique byzantin (ὕπὸ τὴν Ῥωμαϊκὴν πολιτείαν)²⁹. Ensuite, les territoires non gouvernés par Byzance, mais dont l'empire revendique la souveraineté, sont désignés par des locutions verbales (ou bien par le verbe πλησιάζειν) qui précisent leur emplacement géographique à la lumière d'un repère géographique connu. Enfin, les pouvoirs situés à l'extérieur de l'orbite de Byzance sont flanqués de la préposition ἔξω qui, selon MM. Arrignon et Duneau, « évoque l'éloignement tant géographique que politique de ce pays par rapport à Constantinople, tout en reconnaissant son unité »³⁰. C'est le cas, par exemple, des Russes de Kiev³¹.

29 Arrignon et Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » p. 26.

30 Arrignon et Duneau, « La frontière chez deux auteurs byzantins, » p. 29.

31 Si les écrits de Procope et de Constantin VII proposent une rhétorique similaire, il est impossible de ne pas considérer l'importante distance chronologique entre les époques de ces auteurs. Il est clair que l'Empire byzantin, entre le VI^e et le X^e siècle, connaît une série de mutations importantes, notamment sur le plan de l'urbanisation. En effet, le déclin progressif des villes dans les Balkans rend impossible toute comparaison directe entre les sources. À l'intérieur des frontières romaines, Procope, pendant ses voyages en province, visite des cités romanisées (sinon uniformisées), dans lesquelles les élites partagent une culture similaire aux Constantinopolitains. Sa perception du monde provincial romain s'avère ainsi susceptible d'être beaucoup plus nuancée que ses lointains successeurs. Ainsi, le provincial romain, au VI^e siècle, en vertu d'une culture savante et

Constantinople, les Serbes et les Bulgares

À la lumière de ce qui a été dit en amont, il semble que certains auteurs byzantins divisent formellement la *romanitas* et l'espace barbare. Cette séparation semble se calquer sur le Danube, dont le rôle de limite physique et culturelle apparaît particulièrement stable, si bien que l'identité romaine pourrait se définir par opposition avec l'identité des barbares trans-danubiens. Cependant, diviser l'espace balkanique en deux grands blocs identitaires constituerait un exercice malheureux, puisqu'il omettrait à la fois l'existence de larges groupes ethniques non-romains vivant au sud du Danube et les relations identitaires complexes entre les Romains et ces mêmes groupes. En conséquence, il semble essentiel de considérer l'identité romaine non seulement en opposition avec les peuples qui vivent au-delà du Danube, mais également avec ceux qui, ni tout à fait romains ni pleinement barbares, vivent au sud du fleuve.

Dans son article « Contemporary Image and Influence of Byzantium », M. Gilbert Dagron reprend à son compte cette problématique en proposant une catégorisation des peuples étrangers en vertu de leur rapport et de leur distance (relative) avec Constantinople. Parmi ceux-ci, note M. Dagron, existent des groupes ethniques qui occupent une position géopolitique à la fois intermédiaire et confuse. C'est le cas des peuples qui se trouvent « à la fois dedans et dehors, tels les Arméniens, les Géorgiens et, à certains égards, les Syriens jacobites »³². Dans une heureuse formulation, M. Dagron rappelle que ceux-ci, en vertu de leur qualité d'officiers militaires et du nombre important des leurs qui viennent grossir les rangs des armées akritiques, se situent « à la fois dans l'empire et hors de l'empire ». En somme, ces peuples demeurent essentiellement « une population d'entre-deux » : ils sont à la fois des *insiders* en tant

urbaine plus prononcée et plus répandue, se rapproche davantage du Romain que de l'*outsider*. Cependant, le tissu urbain de l'empire de Justinien contraste très fortement avec l'arrière-pays d'un Michel Psellos ou d'un Théophane le Confesseur. Avec l'exception notable de Thessalonique, les Balkans pendant la période médio-byzantine voient leurs grands centres urbains se réduire en taille et en nombre, tandis que les communications difficiles isolent partiellement les cités de la capitale. En conséquence, pour Procope, il est possible de rencontrer des membres de la même élite culturelle et sociale dans l'espace provincial, tandis que pour Psellos, le monde au-delà de Constantinople est tenu pour une vaste mer de médiocrité culturelle, aussi différente de Constantinople que l'espace barbare. Nous remercions le Prof. Dr. Marc Lauxtermann pour cette précision.

32 Gilbert Dagron, « Contemporary Image and Influence of Byzantium, » dans *Byzantium, Identity, Image, Influence, Major Papers, XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies, University of Copenhagen, 18–24 August, 1996*, éd. Karsten Fledelius et Peter Schreiner (Copenhagen, 1996), p. 62.

que soldats frontaliers et des *outsiders* comme intermédiaires semi-barbares. À ce propos, M. Dagron affirme que cette relation bilatérale confuse constitue « l'un des éléments essentiels de l'équilibre frontalier qui s'est instauré au IX^e siècle »³³.

Parallèlement à la malléabilité ethnique, voire identitaire, des frontières, un glissement de la perception des Constantinopolitains semble se dessiner au cours de la période médiobyzantine avant d'attendre son paroxysme au tournant du XIII^e siècle. En effet, alors que pendant l'Antiquité tardive, l'identité romaine conservait une flexibilité suffisante pour attirer dans ses rangs les élites barbares et constituait un attrait susceptible de diluer, puis de supplanter les identités locales³⁴, à l'époque médiobyzantine, la romanité se transforme en cocon de plus en plus imperméable et de plus en plus réservé aux Constantinopolitains. Dès lors, des peuples entiers, soumis de manière temporaire ou durablement par Byzance, et convertis au christianisme, n'ont jamais été considérés comme des Romains à part entière. C'est le cas, par exemple, des Serbes et des Bulgares³⁵.

M. Anthony Kaldellis ainsi que Mme. Malamut et M. Cacouros, écrivent qu'au XII^e siècle, les Serbes christianisés, contrairement aux Petchenègues le siècle précédent³⁶, sont dépeints comme des pillards dévastant sans retenue les territoires de l'empire. Pour décrire leurs actions, les sources déploient de nombreuses références à la nature montagnarde, bestiale et sylvestre des Serbes. Il n'est pas surprenant qu'en dépit d'un tel portrait, les affrontements militaires entre Byzantins et Serbes aient été considérés comme une partie de chasse dont l'empereur joue le rôle du chasseur en chef poursuivant des

33 Gilbert Dagron, « Contemporary Image, » p. 63.

34 Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, p. 47; Evangelos Chrysos, « The Roman Political Identity in Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium, » dans *Byzantium, Identity, Image, Influence*, p. 8.

35 Cet argument entre en contradiction avec la vision de Dimitri Obolensky d'une « communauté » byzantine universelle, notamment lorsqu'il est écrit que « tout païen qui accepte le christianisme orthodoxe cesse d'être un barbare ». Voir Dimitri Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500–1453* (Washington, 1971), p. 274. Pour une critique récente de la thèse de M. Obolensky, voir Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, pp. 95; 100–111 et *Le discours ethnographique à Byzance: continuité et rupture*, trad. Charis Messis et Paolo Odorico (Paris, 2013), pp. 153–170.

36 Elisabeth Blangez-Malamut et Michel Cacouros, « L'image des Serbes dans la rhétorique byzantine de la seconde moitié du XII^e siècle, » dans *Byzantium, Identity, Image, Influence*, p. 113.

animaux sauvages (θηρία)³⁷. Certes, cette violence rhétorique, qui déshumanise les Serbes, répondrait vraisemblablement à l'ultime effort du pouvoir byzantin de conserver un ordre menacé par la volonté des Serbes de s'émanciper politiquement³⁸. Cela dit, il s'avère tout à fait insoutenable de considérer, comme il a été écrit plus haut, l'espace balkanique comme le théâtre de deux identités homogènes et concurrentes (romaine et barbare) : tout rapprochement entre Romains et Serbes, pourtant christianisés, habitant au sud du Danube et sujets de l'empire, constituerait un raccourci malheureux. En effet, l'exemple des Serbes, ces « troupeaux de bovins broutant le gazon en attente d'être abattus »³⁹, démontre que le Danube ne sépare absolument pas l'espace barbare d'une romanité multi-ethnique, polyglotte, chrétienne et unie derrière l'empereur de Constantinople, mais qu'au contraire, le gouffre séparant le Romain du non-romain est clairement attesté dans les provinces balkaniques de Byzance.

Il est possible, à travers des œuvres comme celles de Théophylacte d'Ohrid⁴⁰ et de Grégoire Antiochos⁴¹, de tirer plusieurs parallèles entre l'exemple des Serbes et celui des Bulgares. Théophylacte, pur constantinopolitain contraint de se rendre en Bulgarie, décrit ses habitants comme des bêtes et considère sa nouvelle patrie « comme un marais, un désert plein de scorpions »⁴². Dans le même ordre d'idée, Grégoire critique « le mauvais temps, les vêtements en peau de mouton, les masures pauvres et la nourriture puante des Bulgares »⁴³. Certes, il est difficile de ne pas voir l'œuvre de snobs constantinopolitains décrivant, dans un mélange de mélancolie et de rhétorique conventionnelle, leur nouvelle patrie, ni de croire qu'il s'agissait de leurs convictions profondes⁴⁴.

37 Anthony Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique*, p. 165; Malamut et Cacouros, « L'image des Serbes, » p. 103

38 Malamut et Cacouros, « L'image des Serbes, » p. 119.

39 Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique*, p. 165; Nicétas Choniates, *Historia*, éd. Jean-Louis van Dieten, 2 vols (Berlin, 1975), 1:90.

40 Théophylacte d'Ohrid, *Lettres*, trad. Paul Gautier (Thessalonique, 1986), 4.2, p. 151.

41 Jean Darrouzès, « Deux lettres de Grégoire Antiochos écrites de Bulgarie vers 1173, » *Byzantinoslavica* 23 (1962), 276–284 et *Byzantinoslavica* 24 (1963), 65–86.

42 Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique*, p. 162; Paul Stephenson, « Byzantine Conception of Otherness after the Annexation of Bulgaria (1018), » dans *Strangers to Themselves*, p. 250; Ioannis Stouraitis, « Roman Identity in Byzantium: A Critical Approach, » *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 107/1 (2014), pp. 199–200.

43 Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique*, p. 162.

44 Certes, les lettres de Théophylacte, dont la plupart est adressée à des hauts fonctionnaires, déplorent le fait d'être relégué à un « marais sordide » habité par des « monstres » et illustre les rigueurs de la vie provinciale en comparaison à la vie voluptueuse

Toutefois, à travers leur image polémique des Bulgares se dessine néanmoins une distanciation entre eux, auteurs de la capitale, et le peuple vivant en terre bulgare, si bien qu'il est prudent d'avancer que les Constantinopolitains et les sujets bulgares formaient, au regard des premiers, deux peuples différents. M. Kaldellis illustre d'ailleurs que pendant que les Byzantins se représentaient les barbares insoumis comme des bêtes, ils considéraient les Bulgares soumis comme des bêtes apprivoisées, mais non comme des Romains⁴⁵. Pour soutenir son opinion, M. Kaldellis reprend à son compte les lignes de Michel Attaliatè, qui affirme que le rebelle Basilakès avait rassemblé une armée composée de Francs, de Romains, de Bulgares et d'Arvanites. Ce passage exprime moins polémiquement l'idée que les Bulgares n'étaient pas des Romains, même s'ils faisaient partie de l'empire⁴⁶.

Ces exemples permettent de proposer deux constats. Premièrement, des groupes barbares vivent à l'intérieur des frontières de l'empire. Deuxièmement, les Bulgares et les Serbes n'ont jamais été considérés comme des Romains à part entière, même s'ils ont été sous l'autorité du *basileus* et en communion avec le patriarcat de Constantinople⁴⁷.

Constantinople face aux *Romaioi*

Le statut ambivalent des Serbes et des Bulgares demeure cependant une exception : de tels groupes, larges et récemment annexés par l'empire, résistent à l'assimilation et posent le problème de la catégorisation ethnique, alors que leur identité (au contraire des Romains) n'a jamais été théorisée de manière cohérente⁴⁸. En effet, une étude strictement fondée sur les frontières ou sur les Serbes et les Bulgares impliquerait de poser un jugement sur l'ensemble

de Constantinople. Cependant, l'attitude réelle de Théophylacte apparaît, en réalité beaucoup plus nuancée. Lui-même a défendu avec une vigueur considérable ses administrés contre l'attitude des collecteurs de taxe, en reprochant, dans ses lettres, le caractère intolérable de ces « voleurs ». Voir Obolensky, *Byzantine Commonwealth*, p. 218.

45 Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique*, p. 163.

46 Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique*, pp. 158–159.

47 Cette perception négative des Slaves et des Bulgares n'est pas partagée par Jean Kaminiatès. Celui-ci, dans une lettre évoquant la chute de Thessalonique (904 ap. J.-C.), considère les Slaves Drougoubitai et Sagoudatoi comme des alliés (et non des vassaux), avec qui une paix durable est réciproquement profitable, notamment sur le plan économique. Voir Jean Kaminiatès, *On the Capture of Thessaloniki*, éd. David Frendo et Athanasios Fotiou (Everton Park, 2000), 6, p. 12; 9, p. 17; 20, p. 37.

48 Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, p. 98.

de la *politeia* à la lumière de cas exceptionnels ou marginaux. Il importe donc, pour notre propos, de remarquer que les mécanismes d'altérité associés à ces cas spéciaux sont, particulièrement aux XI^e et XII^e siècles, attestés dans les provinces durablement conquises (symboliquement ou officiellement) par Byzance. Une étude sommaire de l'espace balkanique permet ainsi de nuancer le caractère global de l'identité romaine en confrontant la perception byzantine des provinces de l'empire et, à l'inverse, d'étudier l'image de la capitale chez les auteurs provenant de la province. Nous espérons relever, à travers ces deux axes, un paradoxe identitaire au cœur même de l'Empire et de ses populations considérées comme « romaines ».

D'abord, la province byzantine, peu importe la distance qui la sépare de Constantinople, constitue une sorte d'immense mer noire et vide où les lumières de la civilisation ne brillent plus. Alors que pour l'aristocratie lettrée de la capitale, la civilisation est la prérogative de la seule Constantinople, la province et ses habitants se voient conjuguée, dans les sources, à des jugements de valeurs négatifs. Par exemple, Michael Attaleiates décrit les peuples du sud du Danube, au XI^e siècle, comme des *mixobarbaroi* (μῖξοβάρβαροι). Il s'agit là certainement d'un usage délibérément pernicieux du concept grec classique, tel qu'utilisé par Euripide, Xénophon et Platon, désignant un barbare hellénisé vivant sous l'autorité de la loi grecque⁴⁹.

L'élasticité de la distance entre Constantinople et les « contrées extérieures » (ἐξω χώραι) se révèle davantage dans les lignes de Jean Zonaras. L'écrivain byzantin, en exil sur une île de la mer de Marmara, affirme qu'il écrit son histoire « en ce lieu au bout du monde », opinion étonnante considérant que l'île était à une courte distance navale de Constantinople⁵⁰. Similairement, Jean Tzétzès considère les barbares et les Grecs des îles de l'Égée comme des étrangers indésirables.

Enfin, le gouffre insurmontable entre Constantinople et la province apparaît le plus clairement chez Théodore Balsamon, lui-même se tenant pour « parfaitement constantinopolitain » (Κωνσταντινουπολίτης ἀκραιφνέστατος)⁵¹. Lorsque le canoniste doit passer la nuit dans un village de province, il affirme soudainement voir passer des « créatures paysannes, hommes et femmes »

49 Stephenson, « The Byzantine Frontier, » p. 82; Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca, « Les mixobarbares et les formations politiques paristriennes du XI^e siècle, » *Revue d'histoire roumaine* 12 (1973), p. 67. Voir aussi Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, p. 91.

50 Paul Magdalino, « Constantinople and the Outside world, » dans *Strangers to Themselves*, p. 149.

51 Georges Alexandre Rhallès et Michel Potlès, *Syntagma tōn theiōn kai hierōn kanonōn tōn te hagiōn kai paneuphēmōn apostolōn*, 6 vols (Athènes, 1852–1859), 2:285–286.

(χωριτικά γύναια καὶ ἀνδράρια)⁵². Pour Balsamon, la contrée extérieure constitue un bastion d'hérétiques, dans lesquels ceux-ci vivent en toute impunité, alors qu'à Constantinople, ils sont sévèrement punis⁵³.

Dans le cas contraire, les témoignages précieux de quelques auteurs ayant fait le chemin inverse, à savoir le passage de la province à la capitale, démontrent que la hiérarchie entre capitale et province est respectée dans les deux sens. Du point de vue de la province, Constantinople possède la prestigieuse capacité d'élever la condition sociale des individus. Ainsi, dans la *Diataxis* de Michel Attaleiatès, l'auteur affirme de son propre aveu qu'il provient « de l'étranger » (ἐπὶ ξένης γενόμενος)⁵⁴. Plus loin, admettant qu'il provient d'une famille modeste et étrangère (ὥς καὶ ἀπὸ ξένης καὶ ταπεινῆς τύχης)⁵⁵, il convient qu'il s'agit d'un sérieux désavantage pour sa carrière. Comme beaucoup d'autres jeunes provinciaux, il vient parfaire son éducation à Constantinople, sans cacher sa reconnaissance envers « la métropole des *logoi* et la reine des villes » (τὴν τῶν λόγων μ(ητ)ρόπολιν καὶ βασιλίδα τῶν πόλεων)⁵⁶.

Ces propos extrêmement élogieux d'un « provincial » à l'égard de Constantinople, fleur de l'empire, ne sont pas partagés par la totalité des *outsiders*. Certains, comme Michel Choniatès, nourrissent un profond ressentiment envers Constantinople et ses habitants⁵⁷. Dans une lettre écrite vers 1188–1189, le métropolite d'Athènes déplore que son correspondant, le *protasekretis* Démétrius Drimys, ait refusé de venir en Hellas pour y administrer la justice. Michel Choniatès compare les anciens Grecs, des hommes énergiques qui ont navigué sur les mers, entrepris de longs périple et bravés de

52 Magdalino, « Constantinople and the ΕΕΩ ΧΩΠΑΙ, » p. 184.

53 Rhallès and Potlès, *Syntagma tōn theiōn kai hierōn kanonōn*, p. 246; Magdalino, « Constantinople and the ΕΕΩ ΧΩΠΑΙ, » p. 184; idem, « Constantinople and the Outside world, » p. 150.

54 Paul Gautier, « La Diataxis de Michel Attaliate, » *Revue des Études byzantines* 39 (1981), p. 12; 1.15, p. 19.

55 Michel Attaleiatès, *Diataxis*, 1.44.

56 Gautier, « Diataxis, » p. 12; Michel Attaleiatès, *Diataxis*, 1.17–18.

57 L'attitude de Michel Choniatès, comme celle de Théophylacte, est ambivalente, et en aucun cas nous considérons celui-ci comme un apôtre des provinciaux. Ainsi, l'auteur déplore les paysans misérables, parlant une langue corrompue, tout à fait indigne des grands Athéniens de jadis. Il écrit même qu'en vivant à Athènes, le métropolitain se transforme en barbare. L'exemple n'en demeure pas moins pertinent pour exprimer, comme pour Théophylacte, deux précisions. Premièrement, la province byzantine, qu'elle ait été longtemps ou récemment sous contrôle byzantin, est une terre barbare. Deuxièmement, le recul permet à Michel Choniatès, à partir de la contrée extérieure, de percer à jour les vices et la décadence de la capitale, renforçant l'antagonisme entre les deux mondes.

graves dangers, avec les citoyens de Constantinople qui, bien campés derrière les murs de Théodose, ne daignent plus les franchir:

Mais vous, ô voluptueux citoyens de Constantinople, vous ne voulez pas émerger de vous murs et de vos portes, ni visiter occasionnellement les villes avoisinantes et proches, afin qu'elles puissent recevoir, par vos soins, une expertise légale. Or, vous envoyez des collecteurs de taxes solitaires, les uns après les autres [...], qui rognent ce qui reste des villes. [...] De quoi avez-vous besoin? Les plaines porteuses de blé de Macédoine, de Thrace et de Thessalie ne sont-elles pas cultivées pour vous? Le vin d'Eubée, de Ptelos, de Chios et de Rhodes, n'est-il pas pressé pour vous? Des doigts thébains et corinthiens ne tissent-ils pas pour vous vos habits? D'entières rivières de trésors n'affluent-elles pas à Constantinople comme dans une mer? Pourquoi iriez-vous en terre étrangère et échangeriez-vous pour quelque chose d'étranger vos manières de vivre habituelles, alors qu'il est possible ni d'être trempé par la pluie, ni d'être exposé au soleil, mais au contraire d'apprécier partout les belles choses, sans labeur, en étant assis à la maison ...⁵⁸

En définitive, si les considérations précédentes permettent d'avancer que l'on peut considérer l'Empire romain tardif comme un ensemble cohérent et, selon M. Kaldellis, unifié sous une identité romaine partagée et reconnue⁵⁹, la place

58 Michel Choniatès, *Μιχαήλ Ἀκομινάτου τοῦ Χωνιάτου τὰ σωζόμενα, Τόμος Β΄*, éd. Spyridon Lambros (Athènes, 1880), p. 83: “Ὑμεῖς δὲ, ὦ τρυφερὸι τῆς Κωνσταντίνου πολῖται, οὐδὲ τοῦ τεύχους καὶ τῶν πυλῶν προκύπτειν ἐθέλετε, οὐδὲ τὰς ἀστυγείτονας καὶ ἀγχιπύλους ἐπισκέπτεσθαι πόλεις ποτὲ, ἵνα τῆς παρ’ ὑμῶν εὐνομίας ὄναιντο, μόνους δὲ φορολόγους [...] στέλλετε ἄλλους ἐπ’ ἄλλοις, καλαμωμένους τὰ τῶν πόλεων ἐγκαταλείμματα. [...] Τίνος γὰρ καὶ σπανίζετε; Οὐ Μακεδονίας καὶ Θράκης καὶ θετταλίας πυροφόροι πεδιάδες ὑμῖν γεωργοῦνται, οὐχ ὑμῖν ληνοβατεῖται οἶνος ὁ Εὐβοεὺς καὶ Πτελεατικὸς καὶ Χῖος καὶ Ῥόδιος, οὐ τὰς ἀμπεχόνας ὑμῖν ἰστουργοῦσι θηβαῖοι καὶ Κορίνθιοι δάκτυλοι, οὐ χρημάτων πάντες ἐμοῦ ποταμοὶ ὥς ἐς μίαν θάλασσαν τὴν βασιλίδα πόλιν συρρέουσιν; Ὅτου γοῦν ἔνεκα εἰς ἄλλοδαπὴν βαδιεῖσθε καὶ τῶν συνήθων διατριβῶν τὰς ἀλλοτρίας ἀλλάξεσθε, ἐξὸν μὴ θ’ ὕεσθαι μὴ θ’ ἡλιούσκει καὶ τῶν ἀπανταχῇ καλῶν οἴκοι καθημένους ἀπόνως ἀπολαύειν ...”

59 À l'exception peut-être des Isauriens d'Asie Mineure et des Juifs: Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, p. 85. Sur l'altérité confessionnelle des Juifs vis-à-vis les penseurs chrétiens au VII^e siècle, voir John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture* [Cambridge, 1990 (réimpr. Cambridge, 1997)], pp. 345–348; Jack. A. Goldstone et John Haldon, « Ancient States, Empires, and Exploitation, », et John Haldon, « The Byzantine Empire, » dans *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium*, éd. Ian Morris et Walter Scheidel (Oxford, 2009), pp. 1–29, et pp. 205–254.

de plus en plus démesurée de Constantinople au sein de l'empire, au fil des siècles, crée une séparation formelle entre la capitale et les provinces. En effet, les sources (tantôt élogieuses, tantôt critiques) reconnaissent à Constantinople son pouvoir, son autorité et sa préséance sur les autres cités de l'Empire. Parallèlement, les citoyens de Constantinople, en vertu de l'aura d'invincibilité, de l'opulence et du patrimoine religieux de leur capitale, sont amenés à déprécier leurs compatriotes provinciaux romains presque autant que les *barbaroi* à l'intérieur et au-delà des frontières de l'empire. Ce constat, associé à l'hégémonie constantinopolitaine, invite notamment M. Magdalino à considérer la *politeia* byzantine non comme un territoire défini, associé à un groupe d'aristocrates ou à une dynastie régnante, mais essentiellement à une cité⁶⁰. Sous cet angle, il n'importe pas que l'empire englobe la totalité de l'*oikouménè* ou qu'il soit réduit à l'enclave constantinopolitaine, car tant que des Romains vivent à Constantinople, l'empire existe et la suprématie des Constantinople demeure inchangée⁶¹. La province, qu'elle soit byzantine, moitié-barbare ou barbare, n'existe que pour soutenir économiquement et militairement la capitale⁶². Il devient donc tentant de paraphraser George Orwell et d'affirmer que tous les Byzantins sont Romains, mais certains le sont plus que d'autres, et que la limite entre romanité et espace barbare ne se fixe pas sur le Danube, mais à la première ligne de fortification du mur théodosien.

60 « the empire was in a very literal sense a city state ». Magdalino, « Constantinople and the ΕΕΩ ΧΩΠΑΙ, » p. 190.

61 Magdalino, « Constantinople and the ΕΕΩ ΧΩΠΑΙ, » p. 190.

62 Magdalino, « Constantinople and the ΕΕΩ ΧΩΠΑΙ, » p. 190.

City and Sovereignty in East Roman Thought, c.1000–1200: Ioannes Zonaras' Historical Vision of the Roman State

Nicholas S. M. Matheou

Introduction*

Perhaps more than any other pre-modern polity the Eastern Roman Empire has been defined by its urban centre, even sometimes being described as a form of city state.¹ Prior to the sack of Constantinople in 1204, the empire had had institutional continuity in a city unconquered since Septimius Severus' reign a thousand years before, which became the eastern empire's undisputed centre from 395. Around a broadly stable urban core, however, the wider polity changed radically over this period. With the ever-changing external situation, Constantinople cannot but have assumed greater proportions in East Roman historical thought over the early and central Middle Ages. Moreover, Constantinople's literary construction was inevitably informed by the City's real structural position as the hub of the East Roman state. By the period c.1000–1200, the exponential growth of Greek literature allows us a kaleidoscopic view of the discourses through which the medieval Romans of the east framed their world.² In particular, this 'Golden Age' of historiography

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1 See, for example, Anthony Kaldellis' arguments concerning the East Roman view of their world as a city: Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 42–119; he has nuanced this view more recently to present the empire as a republic, consisting of several "sovereign" cities, held together by the Constantinopolitan centre, see: Anthony Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic* (Cambridge, Mass., 2015). For another recent work on the Constantinopolitan 'imperial city state', see Ioannis Stouraitis, "Roman Identity in Byzantium: A Critical Approach," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 107 (2014), 175–220.

2 This period, especially the twelfth century, has been appropriately described as the "Third Sophistic": Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, pp. 225–307.

forms a rich source for analysing epistemological aspects of the East Roman historical vision.³

This paper will analyse one of these aspects, Constantinople's historical importance. In this process we uncover one of the myriad discourses available to East Roman writers, that of constitutionalism. Our fullest access to a constitutionally informed historical vision of New Rome is found in the *prooimion* of Ioannes Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories*. Written at some point between the early- and mid-twelfth century,⁴ and covering around 6,619 *anni mundi* from Creation to the death of Alexios I Komnenos in 1118, the *Epitome* is the largest extant historical work in pre-modern Greek literature, and the most substantial which was attempted by a single author between the third century AD and 1453. The *Epitome's* sheer chronological breadth makes it an ideal case study for how Constantinople was understood in East Roman thought of the central medieval era.

Elizabeth Jeffreys already noted in 1979 that the Roman Empire is the central strand of Zonaras' narrative, with the historian showing no concern for the eschatology or chronology of earlier 'universal chronicles'.⁵ Ruth Macrides has also demonstrated that Republican Rome is an extremely important part of this story.⁶ The *Epitome's* 'universal' nature is restricted to Jewish history up to the first century AD, with some attention to the great empires of the ancient near east.⁷ Thus for both these scholars Zonaras represents a novel development

3 Scholarship has periodically addressed the question of how the East Romans viewed their ancient past. See, for example, Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Attitudes of Byzantine Chroniclers Towards Ancient History," *Byzantion* 49 (1979), 199–238; Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, "The Fourth Kingdom and the Rhetoric of Hellenism," in *Perception of the Past in Twelfth Century Europe*, ed. Paul Magdalino (London, 1992), pp. 117–256; Anthony Kaldellis, "Historicism in Byzantine Thought," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 61 (2007), 1–24.

4 The dating for Zonaras' work is extremely insecure, but 1150 is a loose *terminus ante quem*, with the work certainly being completed by c.1165. The real date is probably much earlier, but 1150 and 1165 are cardinal points, since these are the *termini ante quos* for, respectively, Konstantinos Manasses' *Brief History*, and Michael Glykas' *Chronicle*, both of which seem to have used the *Epitome*. For a full discussion of this, see Ioannes Zonaras, *The History of Zonaras*, trans. Thomas M. Banchich and Eugene N. Lane (London and New York, 2009), pp. 1–22.

5 Jeffreys, "Attitudes," pp. 233–234.

6 Macrides and Magdalino, "Fourth Kingdom," pp. 126–131.

7 This is to a greater or lesser extent also true of others, but it is particularly pronounced in Zonaras. It is important to be aware that East Roman universal history is an evolved version of Eusebius' various historical productions, particularly as reinterpreted by Ioannes of Antioch in the sixth century. Nevertheless, Zonaras' structuring of this history is highly distinctive. For relevant works, see *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and

in East Roman historical thought, perhaps even one with few successors. In a recent volume, however, Anthony Kaldellis has implicitly sought to overturn this view, arguing that Zonaras' historical perspective was not particular in any sense.⁸ Instead, placing him alongside writers of the fifth to thirteenth centuries, Kaldellis suggests that his understanding is in fact paradigmatic of the East Roman historical vision of their empire. Yet this diachronic perspective, whilst beneficial in certain respects, loses sight of Zonaras' particular historiographical aims.

It has been noted before that the *Epitome's* preface can be seen as an interpretive key for the entire work,⁹ providing the reader with important clues as to the historian's wider purposes. The first part of this paper, therefore, provides a close reading of Zonaras' *prooimion*, and the historical vision which it creates. It will be seen that Zonaras goes to extraordinary lengths to provide an encompassing vision of ancient near eastern and Roman history, structured in a very particular manner. In the second section aspects of Zonaras' vision are placed alongside texts of other broadly contemporary writers. Finally, in the conclusion I will suggest some initial thoughts as to why Zonaras envisions the Roman state as he does.

Zonaras' Historical Vision

Through a comparative analysis of the first two chapters of the *Epitome's* preface, Iordanis Grigoriadis established that Zonaras shared the same historiographical ideals as his contemporary high-register historians and epitomisers.¹⁰ The first chapter relates reasons for writing and criticism of previous historians, and the second covers elements of source treatment, together forming a coherent section on historical methodology. Zonaras clearly used his preface as a vehicle for expressing his historiographical purposes. This should

Robert Nelson (Washington, D.C., 2010). From a Latin perspective, see Richard Burgess and Michael Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time* (Turnhout, 2013).

8 Kaldellis, *Republic*, pp. 29–30.

9 Macrides and Magdalino, "Fourth Kingdom," p. 127.

10 Iordanis Grigoriadis, "A Study of the Prooimion of Zonaras' Chronicle in Relation to Other 12th-Century Historical Prooimia," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 91/2 (January, 1998), 327–344; Ioannes Zonaras, *Epitomae historiarum*, ed. Moritz Pinder and Theodor Büttner-Wobst, 3 vols (Bonn, 1841–1897), prooimion 1–2, 1:1–9. See also Banchich and Lane, *History*, pp. 23–30.

be remembered when reading the subsequent section, where the historian describes what the reader will find in his work.¹¹

In terms of content, much of what is presented in this section conforms to the expectations of the ‘universal chronicle’ genre.¹² Indeed, it is likely that Zonaras has loosely modelled his entire preface on the *prologos* of Georgios Monachos’ ninth-century *Chronicle*.¹³ Georgios also comments on previous historians and literary style, and goes on to describe what will be dealt with in his work. The historian sets up two themes: Jewish scriptural history, and the succession of great near eastern empires. Thus he moves from the Assyrians, to the Persians, to Alexander and the *Diadochoi*, before finally reaching the Romans, who “after the Hellenes [governed] as universal rulers”. Georgios focuses on rulers, empires, and rulership,¹⁴ and ignores all of Rome’s ancient and republican past. Instead, he moves straight from the Macedonians onto the emperors and “their deeds and deaths, from Julius Caesar reaching Diocletian and Maximianus [...] and straight to Constantine the most pious and first Christian emperor”, and from then “finally, [to] Michael son of Theophilos”. The ninth-century historian does have a clear conception of the continuous existence of the Roman state, and the beginning of its ‘modern’ history with Constantine, but it is not the central drama of his story. Instead Rome is primarily framed as the God-appointed successor to the ancient near eastern empires, a clearly eschatological schema.¹⁵

Much of the same content, in roughly identical succession, is found in Zonaras’ *prooimion*. Yet the twelfth-century historian presents the material in a radically different manner. Importantly, the *Epitome*’s preface appears to have been written after the work was completed,¹⁶ and the historian shows clear conceptualisation of his entire narrative structure.¹⁷ Like Georgios,

11 Zonaras, *Epitome*, prooimion 3–4, 1:9–15. See also Banchich and Lane, *History*, pp. 23–30.

12 Jeffreys, “Attitudes,” pp. 201–218.

13 There are simply too many parallels for it to be a coincidence, see Georgios Monachos, *Chronikon*, ed. Charles de Boor [Leipzig, 1904 (repr. Stuttgart, 1978)], prologue 1–4, pp. 1–5.

14 Jeffreys, “Attitudes,” p. 232.

15 An understanding of Rome’s universal empire as inherited from Macedonians – in turn following the Persians, and so on – likely pre-dates Christianisation, but already with Eusebius this becomes part of ‘salvation history’, and the underpinning for eschatological and apocalyptic literature such as that of Pseudo-Methodios: Pseudo-Methodios, *Apocalypse*, ed. Benjamin Garstad, *Apocalypse: Pseudo-Methodius. An Alexandrian World Chronicle* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012).

16 Banchich and Lane, *History*, p. 34.

17 The narrative progression of the prooimion roughly follows that of the main work: Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” pp. 127–128.

Zonaras first outlines the history of the Jewish people and the succession of the near eastern empires.¹⁸ In the *Epitome*, however, the narrative is tightly organised around the city of Jerusalem. Both the Jews themselves and the Assyrian Empire are introduced into the narrative through the Hebrew captivities. That of the Samaritans by Salmanasar emphasises the seizure of the *ethnos* and its removal across the Euphrates, whilst the focus for Nebuchadnezzar's Judean captivity is on Jerusalem: "the city became deserted, the temple was burned, and the entire *ethnos* enslaved". Other founders or rulers of great empires are included primarily because of their interaction with Jerusalem, rather than for themselves *per se*. Zonaras does state that he will discuss Cyrus the Great's rise and establishment of the Persian Empire. Nevertheless, this comes after the historian has emphasised that Cyrus' destruction of Assyrian "sovereignty (*basileia*)" allowed the Jewish *ethnos* "to return to Jerusalem, to rebuild the city, and to renovate the temple". Zonaras' clear concern is to show how the great empires or 'sovereignities' interacted with the Jewish *ethnos* and their native city.

This is evident from the scriptural stories which he mentions: Esther, wife of the Persian *shahanshah* and saviour of "the Jewish *ethnos*";¹⁹ Judith, who tricked an invading general of Nebuchadnezzar;²⁰ and Tobit, the central figure of a book dealing with the history of the Naftali tribe after their deportation to Nineveh in the Assyrian heartland.²¹ Even Alexander the Great is included because the history has "necessarily taken note of him both for other reasons and because he sojourned in Jerusalem [...] and especially honoured the high priest". Zonaras does take a general interest in rulers, elaborating a systematic methodology for assessing rulership, the lack of which he criticises in other historians.²² The rulers themselves, however, are highlighted for their interaction with the story of the Jews in Jerusalem. Thus he intends to narrate "how and by whom the building of the city was hindered, and by whom, in turn, its construction was granted". Zonaras does discuss various elements of Alexander's reign: "how he ended the Persians' *basileia* and made it subject to himself", leading to the Hellenistic kingdoms, which are constructed as the division of Alexander's "*basileia*" into 'four rulerships (*arches*)'. Nevertheless, the historian takes especial care to show how these events interacted with the Holy City.

18 Zonaras highly values Josephus as a source here, as well as the Old Testament.

19 Esther, 2:7.

20 Judith, 8:1–16:25.

21 Tobit, 1:1–14:15.

22 This methodology is a systematic elaboration of a ruler's background, the manner in which he gained sovereignty, his character and qualities, and the manner of his death.

Indeed, the chapter culminates with the Hasmonaeans inviting the Romans to arbitrate their power struggles, with the result that “Pompey Magnus [...] seized the city of Jerusalem and subjected the *ethnos* to the Romans”. After running through “who came subsequently to rule the Jewish *basileia*”, and why and when “governors were dispatched from Rome to Judea”, Zonaras finally says that he will relate “for what reasons the Judeans refused to submit to the Romans [...] and how Jerusalem suffered its final, irrevocable sack.”

By the end of the chapter the image created is that of an *ethnos* whose historical fortunes and sovereignty are entirely bound to its city. Although other geographical spaces are occasionally alluded to, and several figures are mentioned, only Jerusalem and the Jews continually resurface. These two inter-linked aspects are the organising principle of the narrative: the empires of Assyria, Persia, the Macedonians, and Rome are introduced through their contact with the Jews in their city. Zonaras is concerned with the near eastern empires and rulership for their own sakes, reminiscent in this of Georgios’ outlook. However, he is far more systematic in his handling of empires and rulers. He has a particularly subtle understanding of a single “Hellenic *basileia*” split into four *arches*. As in Georgios’ *Chronicle*, the four near eastern empires evoke the ‘Four Kingdoms’ prophecy of the Book of Daniel, the Roman interpretation of which viewed their empire as the final universal kingdom before Judgement Day.²³ In the main part of the *Epitome* Zonaras analyses this prophecy in detail, explicitly setting Rome as the fourth kingdom.²⁴ Nevertheless, in the preface the empires are presented as parts of an almost secular Jewish history.²⁵ Thus, whilst Zonaras understood the successive ‘sovereignties’ in eschatological terms, it is not something he wishes to emphasise in his historical vision. He is decidedly technical in the brief allusion to Jewish government’s progression from high priests to Hasmonaean monarchy. The implied scheme is that Jewish sovereignty, their *basileia*, was invested in its high priesthood after the return from captivity. The Hasmonaeans monopolise the priesthood and therefore the sovereignty, so that they “even bestowed a diadem on themselves”. Notably, Zonaras makes no value judgment on these developments or their religious dimensions. The mutability of the forms of Jewish government,

23 This interpretation is first attested in Josephus. Daniel’s prophecy held special significance for the Christian Roman Empire, giving their state an eschatological mission that fed into apocalyptic literature, amongst other things: Jeffreys, “Attitudes,” p. 223; Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” particularly pp. 127–128, 140.

24 Zonaras, *Epitome* 3.14–3.16, 1:222–228.

25 Even Christ and John the Baptist are only briefly mentioned in connection with Josephus’ works.

and their varying relations with the great powers, is set against the permanence of the Jewish *ethnos* and their collective sovereignty, inextricably connected to the Holy City.

Much as in his main narrative,²⁶ Zonaras uses the Roman sack of Jerusalem in 70 AD as the point from which to transfer focus to the affairs “of the Romans and of Rome [...] from what the *ethnos* of the Romans had their beginning; [and] by whom the region of Italy was previously inhabited”.²⁷ Thus, although the Romans’ non-Italian provenance is referenced, it is not elaborated nor are Aeneas and Troy mentioned. The Romans’ legendary eastern origins are clearly unimportant in Zonaras’ historical vision.²⁸ Instead, as he states at the beginning of the section, and as with the Jews, his main concern is a city, Rome. The first named Roman is Romulus, at the moment of the city’s founding. Thereafter Zonaras states that he will narrate “how the city itself was first ruled; what customs and laws it employed”. Strikingly, the historian goes on to accurately describe the entire constitutional development of the Roman state. Centrally employing the term *basileia*, he describes how Tarquinius Superbus changed this into tyranny. For this reason he is deposed, several wars fought, and “affairs (*pragmata*) for the Romans” were changed from *aristokratia* to *demokratia*, replete with “consuls and dictators, then tribunes too”. It is clear that Zonaras is able to conceive of the Roman state passing through several distinct phases, indeed, that he structures Roman history in terms of constitutional developments.²⁹ He comments that he will describe how different offices functioned, including “what the consulship was in olden days”. Demonstrating again an understanding of the mutability of government forms, Zonaras says he will relate how after the consuls “[...] the *archē* of the Romans later changed to monarchy; how, even if not clearly, Gaius Julius Caesar first pretended to this”, thus causing the Republic’s concluding civil wars, and Augustus’ ultimate victory. Finally, “after he had returned to Rome with brilliant victory celebrations, Octavius (*sic*) pursued *autarchia* and transformed the leadership (*hēgemonia*) of the Romans into genuine one-man rule (*monarchia*)”. Thus the historian

26 It has already been illustrated how deeply Zonaras used his narrative structure to connect biblical history to Roman, and how he structures his later narrative in terms of Roman constitutional progression: Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” pp. 127–128.

27 Also in his main narrative he moves chronologically backwards to the founding of Rome at this point.

28 In his main narrative Zonaras avoids all mention of the Trojan War, though Aeneas is still founder of Alba Longa and thus Rome: Jeffreys, “Attitudes,” pp. 233–234.

29 Paul Magdalino, “Aspects of Twelfth-Century *Kaiserkritik*,” *Speculum* 58/2 (April, 1983), p. 343; Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” pp. 127–128.

has a remarkably subtle understanding of the Roman Republic's gradual transformation, in many respects no different to that of modern scholars.

The Republic is seamlessly woven into the High Empire with the statement that the history will discuss "who reigned after him (Augustus), how and for how long he ruled, and what sort of end of life he met". Importantly, the emphasis on the emperors is now paired with a concern for the patriarchs "of the four great churches [...] Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem". Nonetheless, Zonaras names no patriarchs or emperors until Diocletian and Maximianus Herculius, the same two pagan emperors named in Georgios' *prologos*. Zonaras both notes these emperors' persecution of Christians, and the fact that they stood aside for their caesars to succeed them. Thus they form the background for the rise of Constantius Chlorus, and, finally, Constantine the Great, "*isapostolos*". Predictably, Constantine is given the longest treatment of any individual, with all the most famous features of his life specifically mentioned. Not least of these, how Constantine "transferred the *basileia* from the senior Rome" to the new city he named after himself in "Byzantion, having dubbed it the new Rome". With Zonaras saying he will discuss "who reigned *therein* after him",³⁰ Constantine's conversion and transferral of Roman sovereignty to the City brings together all the section's themes. It is the final specific notice of what will be discussed, and the historian returns to his systematic methodology for subsequent rulers and the Constantinopolitan patriarchs,³¹ before commenting "And thus, the account, descending as far as those that have become emperors in our own time, concludes the *epitome*".

It is clear that these two chapters constitute a single section which elucidates the *Epitome's* historical vision, much as the previous two chapters form a single whole which elaborates Zonaras' methodology. The basic themes can be found in previous East Roman historical works, presenting an image of the distant past focussed on successive near eastern empires and important rulers, the history of the Jews up to Titus' sack of Jerusalem, and a Roman history focussed on mythical origins and eventual empire.³² Yet Zonaras' structuring of this image is innovative in first avoiding explicit eschatology. As with other chroniclers, ancient Jewish history forms a comparative *exemplum* for the Romans. However, rather than foreshadowing their position as the providentially chosen people, the Jews are constructed as an *ethnos* bound to their

30 Emphasis added.

31 Zonaras adds to his methodological approach here that he will assess which emperors and patriarchs were heretics, thus closely following the equivalent section of Georgios' preface.

32 Jeffreys, "Attitudes," pp. 200–218; see also Kaldellis, *Republic*, pp. 29–30.

ancestral city, with a collective sovereignty – a *basileia* – which is constant whilst being mutable in form. This mirrors an identical construction of the Romans, first in Rome, and then in Constantinople. The Jews' importance as the original chosen people is implicit, of course, but Zonaras does not bring it to the fore. Similarly, the real function of the successive great empires seems to be to provide a history of universal sovereignty and its interaction with Jewish Jerusalem, rather than to explicitly construct Rome as the fourth of Daniel's kingdoms – although Zonaras does note in the Jewish chapter that he will discuss “certain visions of the prophet [Daniel], which are all recounted with an abbreviated exegesis”.³³

A second apparent innovation is the Republic's central position in Roman history.³⁴ Indeed, Zonaras complains about a lack of republican sources both in his preface and in the main body of the work. In a long digression, placed at a narrative break between the sacks of Corinth and Carthage and the rise of Pompey Magnus, he apologises for providing no information on the intervening period. The historian regretfully states that he has to pass over the things “accomplished by the consuls and dictators”, since he cannot see the necessary books in exile “far from the City”.³⁵ He therefore passes onto the era of Pompey and Caesar “having related beforehand certain details, in order that the course by which the Romans were brought to *autarchia* from *aristokratia* and from *demokratia* be clear”.

Remarkably, in excusing himself Zonaras clearly states the purpose of his Republican material: to provide the Roman Empire's constitutional history. Although the historian does reveal a pronounced interest in the period for its own sake,³⁶ it is emphasised as a key part of a single constitutional development. This development stretches from the ancient monarchy, through the Republic to the Augustan settlement, and finally culminates with the establishment of New Rome. Zonaras' very language emphasises the unity of this story – the preface's entire history of the Roman *basileia*, from Romulus to Constantine, is written as one long sentence stretching sixty-two lines in the standard edition.

33 Importantly, these two Jerusalemite and Roman themes are discernible in the structuring of the main narrative, with book x ending simultaneously with the death of Augustus and the birth of Jesus, Zonaras, *Epitome* 10.39, pp. 456–457.

34 As stated, this has been long established, see note 6.

35 Interestingly, Zonaras seems to run out of Republican information exactly at the point from which Dio is no longer extant today: Banchich and Lane, *Zonaras*, p. 37; see also Magdalino, “*Kaiserkritik*,” p. 343.

36 Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” pp. 127–128.

Overall, Zonaras presents an impersonal, state-focused, and largely secular historical vision, with a clear understanding of historical change. Even where he does have an eschatological understanding of the Roman past, as with the prophecy of Daniel, Zonaras goes to lengths to integrate this into a constitutionalist scheme in the main narrative, and does not emphasise it in his preface.³⁷ Constantinople is New Rome, and implicitly New Jerusalem, but this is a result of identifiable historical developments, particularly concerning the Romans' 'constitution'. Zonaras demonstrates how the collective sovereignty of the Roman *ethnos* evolved as a state over time, and was inextricable from their home city. Much as Georgios Monachos, the implication of Zonaras choosing to end with Constantine is that here is where 'modern' Roman history begins. From this point all the necessary pieces are in place for a comprehensive history of the Roman Empire up to his own era, particularly the establishment of imperial sovereignty in the City.

A Common Vision?

Having analysed Zonaras' historical vision in seclusion, it is now possible to provide literary context for the image which he creates. In outlining the development of the Roman *basileia*, Zonaras makes use of remarkably subtle political vocabulary. This enables him to discuss general changes in the Roman state's character, moving from *aristokratia* to *demokratia*; as well as specific changes in one section of the state, such as Caesar and Augustus transforming the "rulership (*archē*)" into "one-man rule (*monarchia/autarchia*)".

This political vocabulary is a central part of Kaldellis' monograph, *The Byzantine Republic*, where he identifies its use in several texts across the late antique and medieval eras. He has proposed a relatively clear division of terminology: *kratos* refers to "power";³⁸ *basileia* to the "the imperial office or monarchy and its authority, functions, and extensions";³⁹ and *politeia* to the East Roman political body as a whole, permanent throughout its existence in various 'aristocratic', 'democratic', and 'monarchical' forms.⁴⁰ Although he does recognise that *basileia* was occasionally used to refer to the whole state, he still insists on "[...] the priority of the *politeia* and its theoretical difference from

37 Ibidem.

38 Kaldellis, *Republic*, p. 38.

39 Ibidem.

40 This is in general the argument of the monograph, but see particularly: Kaldellis, *Republic*, pp. 19–31.

and priority to the *basileia*, which was merely the monarchy that governed the polity after Augustus.”⁴¹ It is clear from the preceding analysis, however, that these firm lines cannot be drawn.

It may be more helpful, therefore, to think of these terms as forming a constitutional discourse, informed by the long traditions of Greco-Roman literature, which allowed Zonaras to carefully engage with medieval East Roman state and society.⁴² The question in providing the *Epitome*’s literary context, therefore, is how Zonaras’ use of this constitutional discourse compares with that of his contemporaries. It has already been demonstrated that Zonaras markedly differs in outlook from two contemporary ‘universal’ chroniclers, Konstantinos Manasses, and Michael Glykas.⁴³ Earlier chroniclers do show a concern for laying the historical basis for the emergence of the Christian Roman Empire based in Constantinople,⁴⁴ but this is without Zonaras’ care for constitutional matters. Not unreasonably, therefore, Ruth Macrides has asked whether this material would even be of interest to contemporary East Romans.⁴⁵ However, a different picture is presented if we find *comparanda* from other genres than ‘universal chronicles’.

Two historical works of Zonaras’ eleventh-century predecessors provide fitting points from which to begin this process: one which Zonaras used in his composition,⁴⁶ Michael Psellos’ *Historia Syntomos*;⁴⁷ and another by Psellos’ contemporary, Michael Attaleiates’ *Ponēma Nomikon*.⁴⁸ Notably, unlike

41 Kaldellis, *Republic*, p. 39.

42 Paul Magdalino drew attention to the “constitutionalist” nature of imperial rhetoric and *Kaiserkritik* in 1983, see Magdalino, “*Kaiserkritik*,” p. 327.

43 Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” pp. 120–136.

44 Ibidem, p. 233.

45 Ibidem, p. 131.

46 Michael Psellos, *Historia syntomos* (HS), ed. Willem Aerts (Berlin, 1990), p. xxiv; Dejan Dželebžić, “Izreke careva u Kratkoj istoriji Mihaila Psela”, *Zbornik radova Vizantoloskog instituta* 44 (2007), 155–73 (main text in Greek); Apostolos Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί και Χρονογράφοι* [*Byzantine Historians and Chroniclers*], vol. 3, pp. 162–69.

47 On the *Historia Syntomos*’ production, sources, and pedagogical intention for Psellos’ pupil, Michael, see Theofili Kampianaki’s study in the present volume, pp. 311–325.

48 Attaleiates dedicated this work to Michael VII Doukas in 1072. It has, to my knowledge, never been the principle subject of a study, but it has been included in Wanda Wolska-Conus W., “L’ecole de droit et l’enseignement du droit a Byzance au X le siecle: Xiphilin et Psellos,” *Travaux et Memoirs* 1(1979), 97–100, and Leopold Wenger, *Die Quellen des romischen Rechts, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Denkschriften* 2 (Vienna, 1953). More recently Dimitris Krallis has included it peripherally in his pioneering study of Attaleiates as an eleventh-century political figure, see Dimitris Krallis, *History as Politics in the Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Tempe, 2012).

Zonaras' *Epitome*, these two texts have an explicit context and audience: they were both written in the early 1070s for the emperor Michael VII Doukas. They also have very clear historiographical purposes, the *Historia* intends to discuss the rulers of Old and New Rome, and the *Ponēma Nomikon* to provide a synopsis of Roman law, including a brief legal history at the beginning. Thus they provide important *comparanda* for Zonaras' vision, which has similar historiographical purposes to both texts, although it is far more holistic in scope. Nevertheless, the *Historia* in particular has an extremely close historical vision to the *Epitome*, beginning with Romulus' establishment of Rome and proceeding with each king until Tarquinius Superbus,⁴⁹ where Psellos writes:

The royal *politeia* of the Romans remained for four hundred and forty years after the founding of Rome, until in the reign of Tarquinius it became a tyranny, the state (*kratos*) was changed from a *monarchia*, or *basileia*, into *aristokratia*, [...] And it remained in such a manner until Julius Caesar.⁵⁰

Thereafter Psellos elaborates the rule of the consuls, until he notes that this form of government is ill-fitting for his main purpose, and he skips to Julius Caesar, "who changed the *aristokratia* of the Romans into a *monarchia* and the consulship into a *basileia*".⁵¹ These two quotes are significant, especially considering that Zonaras read and used the *Historia*. They demonstrate that, although Zonaras and Psellos have a broadly shared understanding of Caesar's significance, their specifics and use of constitutional terms are quite different. Firstly Psellos has no intermediate 'democratic' constitutional stage, and secondly he constructs Caesar as the first emperor without nuance. This is very different to Zonaras' subtle transformation of the Republic. Moreover, the later historian does not claim that either Caesar or Augustus established a *basileia*, rather they change the "*hēgemonia* of the Romans" into *autarchia/monarchia*. Thus it is impossible to establish universal meanings for the terms contained in East Roman constitutional discourse.

Nonetheless, despite these particular differences, Psellos' and Zonaras' historical visions remain remarkably similar. Neither emphasises the role of Aeneas, so that Romulus and Rome's foundation form the real beginning to their Roman histories, with Psellos even noting that "The first settlers of the town were barbarian autochthones". Moreover, although Psellos is mainly

49 Psellos, *HS*, pp. 1–6.

50 All translations are my own adaptations from the edition; Psellos, *HS*, pp. 6–7.

51 Psellos, *HS*, pp. 10–11.

concerned with rulers, the city of Rome is a key narrative presence in his first few chapters, with the kings constructed as both “of the Romans” and “of Rome”. He also mentions how Romulus “framed laws for [the City]”, thereby illustrating the strong connection between city and legal sovereignty that is reflected in Zonaras’ preface.

Although Attaleiates does not begin his story with either Romulus or the founding of Rome, this connection is clearly evident in his work’s first chapter:

In the earliest years, when the subjection of the Romans (τὸ τῶν Ρωμαίων ὑπήκοον) was regulated by the high consulships, (for then there were no imperial monarchs (μοναρχίαι βασιλικαί), but each year two consuls were elected by the whole people and the senate – which is to say the more noble archons of Rome – and they would order both civic and military matters) none of the laws were officially written in various books; rather, the many shared in the ordering of the city at that time [...]⁵²

Attaleiates explicitly frames laws as being for the purpose of ordering the city, a construct emphasised in the second chapter where he describes the writing of the Twelve Tables, “the laws of Rome”.⁵³ Thus all three writers create a strong connection between sovereignty and city, and trace the roots of the East Roman system to the earliest days of Old Rome. Notably, however, neither Attaleiates nor Psellos refer to Constantine’s *translatio imperii*, the event which forms the culmination of Zonaras’ narrative. Entirely unmentioned in Attaleiates, Psellos does note that Constantine “left ancient Rome urged by divine oracles and founded the city which bears his name”,⁵⁴ but the City does not form any kind of pivotal transformation in the *Historia*’s narrative. Whilst there are clear resonances between the historical visions of Psellos, Attaleiates, and Zonaras, the twelfth-century historian makes more extensive use of constitutional discourse, and lays an emphasis on Constantinople not present in their works.⁵⁵

52 Michael Attaleiates, *Ponēma Nomikon*, ed. Ioannis Zepos and Panagiotis Zepos, in *Jus Graecoromanum* VII (Athens, 1931), p. 411.

53 Attaleiates, *Ponēma*, pp. 411–412.

54 Psellos, *HS*, pp. 36–37.

55 In part this can be put down to the specific aims of Psellos’ and Attaleiates’ texts, but the complete absence of even the concept of *translatio imperii* is notable nonetheless.

Zonaras' picture has stronger resonances in this regard with the sixth-century *Patria* of Hesychios Illoustrios.⁵⁶ The latter begins his work by saying:

When 362 years had passed since the monarchy of Caesar Augustus in the elder Rome, and her affairs were already coming to an end, Constantine son of Constantius took over the sceptres and established the new Rome, ordering that it should be equal in rank to the first. For after having been administered by tyrants and kings, and often having been governed by the ways of *aristokratia* and *demokratia*, it (Byzantion) finally achieved its present greatness.

So we should tell how it originated in the beginning and by whom it was settled [...]⁵⁷

This image and its wording is so close Zonaras' preface that it is plausible that he had read this text, either in its original form, or as part of the late-tenth century *Patria*. Scholars have recognised Hesychios' desire to give Byzantion a history equivalent to that of Rome.⁵⁸ Importantly, this meant Roman constitutional history, and Hesychios presents a progression from tyranny, to 'aristocracy', and 'democracy' identical to Zonaras'. Likewise, in the main body of the text Hesychios' protagonist is Byzantion itself, forming the narrative's organising principle. Moreover, immediately prior to turning to Byzantion's Roman history, Hesychios recaps his entire constitutional scheme:

So it was that the Byzantines had had aristocracies, democracies, and even tyrannies. Yet when, in the time of consular government (ὑπάτων ἐπικρατείᾳ), Roman rule superseded all local powers, it also subdued the Hellenic *ethnē*, and likewise the Byzantines submitted to it.⁵⁹

56 On this text's relationship to the late-tenth century *Patria*, and direction to relevant scholarship, see Albrecht Berger, *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople: The Patria* (Cambridge, Mass., 2013), pp. vii–xxi. On the text itself, see Anthony Kaldellis, "The Works and Days of Hesychios the Illoustrios of Miletos," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 45 (2005), 381–403.

57 *Patria*, ed. Theodor Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1901–1907), 1.1. The translation here is adapted from Albrecht Berger, *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople: The Patria* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012), p. 3.

58 See Kaldellis, "Hesychios the Illoustrios," p. 396; Raymond Janin, *Constantinople byzantine: Développement urbain et repertoire topographique* (Paris, 1964), p. 11; Gilbert Dagron, *Constantinople imaginaire: études sur le recueil des Patria* (Paris, 1984), p. 26.

59 *Patria* 1.33.

All the essential features of Zonaras' historical vision are found in Hesychios' text: both writers construct the constitutional histories of *ethnē* bound with their home cities, and narrate the interaction of these cities with the great empires of the ancient world. Whilst Hesychios wrote in the sixth century, his work's inclusion in the later tenth-century *Patria* shows that its perspective was relevant to East Romans of the central medieval era. Indeed, the above quote is found *in toto* in Konstantinos VII Porphrogennetos' *De Thematibus*, notably in the context of justifying Constantinople's position as New Rome.⁶⁰ Between these three texts, therefore, it is possible to identify Zonaras elaborating historical visions first seen in the late-tenth and eleventh centuries with subtle use of constitutional discourse, to present his own comprehensive history of the Roman Empire of Constantinople.

To simplify a complex and varied process, during the period *circa* 1000–1200 there was increased interest in exploring discursive boundaries amongst East Roman writers of diverse socio-economic background.⁶¹ This literary explosion included philosophy and rhetoric,⁶² historiography,⁶³ poetry,⁶⁴ and

60 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *Peri Thematōn*, ed. Agostino Pertusi (Vatican City, 1952), 1.16.

61 For the classic study of the growth of literature in this period, and its relation to socio-cultural changes, see Alexander Kazhdan and Annabel Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (California, 1985).

62 See, for example, two recent studies on Psellos and 'Hellenising' philosophical and rhetorical literature in this period: Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 191–316; Stratis Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013).

63 Perhaps influenced by the tenth-century *Historica Excerpta* project, the period ca. 1000–1200 can be characterised as a golden age for East Roman historiography. For a general summary and outline of East Roman historians, see Karpozilos, *Byzantine Historians*, 3 vols, in particular see vol. 3.

64 Poetry in the eleventh century provides a unique source for socio-literary history illustrating a dynamic secular society, see Floris Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025–1081* (Oxford, 2012). The twelfth-century saw use of, for example, more varied registers in East Roman poetry. See, for example, Emmanuel Bourbouhakis, "Political Personae: the Poem From Prison of Michael Glykas: Byzantine Literature Between Fact and Fiction," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 31/1 (2007), 53–75.

the Greco-Roman novel,⁶⁵ together forming a kind of “Third Sophistic”.⁶⁶ The *Epitome* is part of this literary context, and a deeper view of the key term present in the preface will aid in understanding Zonaras’ discursive exploration of constitutionalism.

This central term is *basileia*. Thus far translated as ‘sovereignty’, and dismissed as solely meaning “monarchy” by Kaldellis,⁶⁷ the term has several connected meanings all related to the exercise of power.⁶⁸ Zonaras’ specific usage, however, denotes the form, exercise, and geographic location of power, and the political expression of an *ethnos*’ collective sovereignty. Interestingly, the late-tenth century *Souda* provides five definitions of *basileia* over three entries. One states that, as well as meaning “kingdom/empire”, *basileia* refers to “the dignity/office (τὸ ἀξιωμα).”⁶⁹ Another defines *basileia* as “rulership (*archē*) without accountability”. Nevertheless, this absolutism was discursively entwined with a strong idea of the public, civic state, separate but ruled by the holder of the imperial office.⁷⁰ As the *Souda* explains:

Basileia [is] a possession of things held in common, but the *dēmosia* [are] not *basileia*’s possessions. Therefore the forcible and violent collection of taxes should be hated as tyrannical insolence, but the reasoned and benevolent requests for contributions should be honoured as concern for the public welfare.⁷¹

There are several parallels with the vision of *basileia* presented by Zonaras. For him, *basileia* is the collective expression of an *ethnos*’ sovereignty. It is mutable, with both the Jewish and Roman sovereignties passing through distinct forms such as priesthood and aristocracy. Nevertheless, it is permanent, and it

65 The twelfth-century saw the re-emergence of this form of Greco-Roman literature after an apparent disappearance of well over half a millennium, see Panayiotis Agapitos and Ole Smith, *The Study of Medieval Greek Romance* (Copenhagen, 1992). It has been argued that this in particular shows the East Roman ability to understand historical change and represent different historical epochs, see Kaldellis, “Historicism,” pp. 7–12.

66 Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, pp. 225–316.

67 Kaldellis, *Republic*, p. 38.

68 It can mean rulership, a ruler’s power and majesty, the area under an empire or person’s control, and carries several scriptural overtones, meanings, and references; see the various definitions of *basileia* in the dictionaries of Liddell and Scott, Lampe, and Bauer.

69 *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. Ada Adler (Leipzig, 1928–1938), Beta, 146, p. 146; all *Souda* translations have been adapted from: <http://www.stoa.org/sol/history.shtml> (accessed October 2014).

70 Dagron, *Emperor*, pp. 21–22.

71 *Lexicon*, Beta 148, p. 148.

is the possession of the *ethnos*. The *Souda* clearly sees collective sovereignty in similar terms, and repeats the same, unattributed quote under the definition of *dēmosios*.⁷²

The mid-eleventh century *Peira* uses *dēmosia* in a remarkably similar manner to the *Souda*, and has clear parallels with Zonaras historical vision. As its writer, the judge Eustathios Romaïos, comments:

Those things are the *dēmosia*, which are called *dēmosia*, which the *dēmos* had and enjoyed before there was a *basileus* and which passed to the *basileia* once it had been constituted.⁷³

Although *basileia* is here used in a restricted sense to mean monarchy, like Zonaras, Attaleiates, and Psellos, Romaïos has a strong awareness of the constitutional history of the Roman state, and there are clear equivalences with the *Souda* in his construction of *dēmosia*. Whilst these texts have different purposes, and emerge from different contexts, they all participate in the same constitutional discourse.

Another telling parallel is found in Theodoros Prodromos' commentary on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*:

“The best *politeia*”, i.e. the *basileia* in which *monarchia*, *demokratia* and *aristokratia* are combined. For the *basileus* rules, but the best of men govern beside him, since they are wise and can make useful suggestions. But *demokratia* is also to be seen: a certain *taxis* surrounds the *eparchos* and rules the *polis*.⁷⁴

Prodromos here includes the *Epitome*'s three constitutional stages as components of the single Roman *basileia*. The tripartite Roman constitution recalls Polybios' famous discussion of the Republican “Roman *politeia*”,⁷⁵ yet Prodromos has notably updated it to refer directly to twelfth-century

⁷² *Lexicon*, Delta 460, p. 460.

⁷³ Eustathios Romaïos, *Peira, Jus Graecoromanum*, ed. Ioannis Zepos and Panagiotis Zepos (Athens, 1931), 4.1.43. See also Dimitris Krallis, “Democratic” Action in Eleventh-Century Byzantium: Michael Attaleiates “Republicanism” in Context, *Viator* 40/2 (2009), 50–51.

⁷⁴ Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” p. 146; *Anonymi et Stephani, in artem rhetorica commentaria*, ed. Hugo Rabe, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, 22/2 (Berlin, 1896), p. 296.

⁷⁵ Polybios, *The Histories*, trans. William Paton, in the revised edition by Frank Walbank and Christian Habicht, 6 vols. (Cambridge Mass., 2010), 6:1–58.

Constantinople: the *basileus* and his advisors govern the empire, and “a certain *taxis*” around the *eparchos* rules the City. This is a considered discursive engagement with the medieval East Roman state. What is more, Prodhromos constructs the entire Roman *basileia* as a city, *the City*. Much as Zonaras, he clearly understands Constantinople as the definitive sovereign space, the only space in which and from which the *politeia* operates. Indeed, the etymological root of *politeia* would not be lost on eleventh- and twelfth-century writers.

Although a separate study is required for this issue, it should be noted that the constitutional discourse uncovered here fed directly into Zonaras’ criticisms of contemporary imperial policies.⁷⁶ For example, in a gloss on Canon 28 of Chalcedon, which elevated New Rome to the level of Old Rome because it was “honoured with the monarchy and the senate”, the historian responds that the “former has been transformed into a tyranny and the latter has folded up and gone away”.⁷⁷ Zonaras thus focuses his attack on the Komnenian regime through Constantinople’s status as politically equal to the elder Rome: sovereignty and city are inseparable.

Nowhere is this axiom clearer than in the *Epitome*’s section dealing with Constantinople’s founding.⁷⁸ Recounting the prophecy of a certain astronomer Valens that the City would last for 696 years, Zonaras comments:

So either one must suspect Valens’ prophecy was false and that his skill failed or one must reckon that he spoke of the years in which the customs (*ta ethē*) of the *politeia* were preserved, the status quo (*katastasis*) and senate honoured, its citizens flourished and authority (*epistasia*) was lawful, that is to say, the state was indeed monarchical (τὸ κράτος δὴ τὸ βασιλείον), but not an outright tyranny, with those ruling reckoning the public things (*ta koina*) private and using them for their own pleasures [...] [and] making gifts from the *dēmosia* to whom they wished [...]⁷⁹

76 These were largely to do with alleged grants of imperial power and public land to Komnenian family members, see Magdalino, “*Kaiserkritik*,” particularly pp. 329–333; and Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” pp. 128–131.

77 Ibidem, p. 130; Georgios Alexandrou Rhalles and Michael Potles, *Syntagma tōn theiōn kai hierōn kanonōn tōn te hagiōn kai paneuphēmōn apostolōn*, 6 vols (Athens, 1852–1859), 2:282–284. See also Ruth Macrides, “Perception of the Past in the Twelfth-Century Canonists,” in *Kinship and Justice in Byzantium*, ed. eadem (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 589–600.

78 Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” pp. 130–131.

79 Zonaras, *Epitome*, 13.3.13–15.

It is important that Zonaras chose the founding of Constantinople to make this statement on the Roman constitution – indeed, he equates the fall of the *politeia* with the fall of the *polis*. The implication, as in his preface, is that this is the transition to ‘modern’ Roman history, and so the moment to make such a statement on the text’s wider purposes. Thereafter Constantinople provides the setting for the entire political drama of New Rome, dominating the text much as the City dominated the empire. The *Epitome* seeks to comprehend this history, and thence use it as a vehicle for discursively engaging with the twelfth-century Roman Empire of Constantinople. Zonaras is not interested in constitutionalism and ancient history for its own sake, but for its implications in his own era. This is clear from the prophecy itself: the 696 years in which Zonaras says a proper constitution was maintained last well into the middle ages, ending roughly with the death of Emperor Basileios II.⁸⁰

Conclusion

In conclusion, we find that City and sovereignty are so intimately bound in East Roman thought as to be inextricable from each other, united in the term *politeia*.⁸¹ This term, as well as *basileia*, and a number of other important signifiers contained in constitutional discourse, allowed Zonaras and others to carefully engage with the medieval Eastern Roman Empire. Bearing this shared discourse in mind, it is likely that contemporaries did indeed read Zonaras for his Republican material.⁸² The *Epitome*’s rich manuscript tradition alone is testament to its popularity, and while Glykas may have been highly selective in his reading, others would have engaged with the constitutional aspects of its historical vision. Whereas scholars have variously seen socio-political, ethno-cultural and religious groupness as the strongest markers of a Roman sense of self in eleventh- and twelfth-century New Rome, Zonaras and many of his contemporaries give far more historiographical prominence to the City and

80 This is surely not accidental – Skylitzes, for example, draws attention to the empire’s apparent sharp downward turn after his death in 1025: Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. Hans Thurn (Berlin, 1973), p. 371.

81 This term has also been identified as important for tenth-century imperial conceptualisations: Paul Magdalino, “Constantine VII and the Historical Geography of Empire,” in *Imperial Geographies in Byzantine and Ottoman Space*, ed. Sahar Bazzaz, Yota Batsaki, and Dimitar Angelov (Boston Mass., and London 2013), p. 39.

82 Macrides and Magdalino, “Fourth Kingdom,” p. 131; notably both Ioannes Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates begin their works where Zonaras ends, and Choniates in particular makes use of constitutionalism, see Magdalino, “*Kaiserkritik*”.

the nature of the state it contained.⁸³ Thus Niketas Choniates describes himself falling to his knees before the Theodosian walls as he leaves conquered Constantinople, reproaching them for still standing when all they were meant to protect was gone.⁸⁴

Why Zonaras and other East Roman writers constructed their state in this manner is a complex question, and only suggestions can be made here. Kaldellis' argument is that the East Roman state really *was* the "monarchical republic" described by Zonaras and others.⁸⁵ Certainly, the range of texts identified both here and in his monograph provide support for this view. Nevertheless, in both cases only historiographical, legal, and rhetorical works have been analysed. To use these texts' conceptual constructs as interpretive keys for others of different periods and genres, much less for historical events themselves, creates serious methodological problems. It is one thing to note that Zonaras follows earlier writers in drawing a direct line of descent from the ancient Roman monarchy, through the Republic, to Constantinople,⁸⁶ and another thing entirely to explain why he and his eleventh-century forebears chose to emphasise very different aspects of Roman history within this scheme. The use of constitutional vocabulary is contextual, and its particular role must be analysed each time it is met.

To take one brief example, the following hymn of the ninth-century hymnographer Kassia displays some striking features:

When Augustus established *monarchia* (μοναρχήσαντος) upon the earth, |
the *polyarchia* of men ceased; | and when You came into human form
through the Pure One | the polytheism of idols was destroyed. | As one
worldly *basileia* | the cities became | and also in one divine *despoteia* | the
ethnē believed. | The peoples were registered by Caesar's decree; | we the
faithful have been inscribed in the name of Your divinity, | when our God
assumed human form.⁸⁷

In this hymn the twin themes of Augustus assuming *monarchia* and Christ assuming human form are artfully enunciated as a single eschatological moment. Thus we find a ninth-century writer capable of entwining historical

83 On this issue, see Stouraitis, "Roman Identity."

84 Choniates, *History*, pp. 591–592.

85 This is the whole volume's argument, see: Kaldellis, *Republic*.

86 Kaldellis, *Republic*, pp. 29–30.

87 Kassia, *Menaion on the Birth of Christ*, Kassia. *The Legend, the Woman, and Her Work*, ed. and trans. Antonia Tripolitis (New York and London, 1992), p. 19.

vision, constitutional discourse, and eschatological exegesis, in a genre where this might not be expected. Not only are Augustus and Christ linked, but also the subsuming of the “cities” into one *basileia* is paralleled with the uniting of the *ethnē* into one holy lordship, and the benefits of Caesar’s writ are mirrored in the inscription of the believers in the Lord. Zonaras ends book eleven of his history, when he moves from Jewish to Roman history, with an extended discussion of the connection between Augustus’ monarchical universal rule and Christ’s birth.⁸⁸ Considering the relative absence of eschatology and other religious features from the preface, this is a notable emphasis. The implication is that Zonaras does in fact recognise the Roman Empire’s eschatological Christian mission, but chose not to bring it to the fore in his overall historical vision. Nevertheless, it is present in his text, and so cannot be discounted. Thus we must be subtle in how we imagine faith interacting with political ideology.

As a final line of thought, we should consider the question of why Zonaras constructed the East Roman state in this manner from a socio-contextual perspective. Notably, the historian constructs the urban core as the very definition of the entire Roman *politeia* throughout its history, with the empire itself curiously absent. By comparison, the eleventh-century Kekaumenos in his *Strategikon* constructs the empire consistently as “Romania”, a highly territorial conceptualisation implying a Roman homeland.⁸⁹ Importantly, Kekaumenos also makes use of historical *exempla*, including Augustus and Herakleios, so we can only put his differences down to authorial choice, not literariness or education.⁹⁰ Perhaps the greater importance of Constantinople post-Manzikert influenced Zonaras’ choice, in a period when much of old ‘Romania’ had been lost.

There is another option, however. Kekaumenos, although himself unidentifiable, was a scion of a family with a strong tradition of military command in the provinces and frontiers.⁹¹ Zonaras, by contrast, was a career bureaucrat like the vast majority of eleventh- and twelfth-century historians, and also like many of them experienced both the heights and the depths this offered.⁹² Thus

88 See above note 33.

89 See particularly his begging of emperors to *leave* the City “as if in a prison”, and to “go out into the lands which are under you, and into the themes, and see the injustices which the poor suffer”, Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes* (SAWS edition, 2013), p. 103, ll. 20–27.

90 Kekaumenos, p. 17, l. 15; p. 101, l. 20.

91 *ODB*, vol. 2, p. 1119.

92 This number includes, in chronological order, Psellos, Attaleiates, Skylitzes, Zonaras, Glykas, Kinnamos, and Choniates. Magdalino has noted that Zonaras “shared the interests and outlook of an increasingly self-confident professional bourgeoisie”, see Magdalino “*Kaiserkritik*,” p. 331.

these historians' lives had been shaped by the imperial state which they discursively explored. They also tended to be from a middling, urban background, though not necessarily Constantinopolitan. Both Attaleiates and Choniates were Anatolian provincials, but gained access to positions in the City through the same mixture of patronage and education as the Constantinopolitan Psellos. Moreover, as illustrated by the example of Eustathios Romaïos and the *Peira*,⁹³ legal education was becoming increasingly prominent in the eleventh- and twelfth-centuries.⁹⁴ Psellos and Attaleiates both practiced as judges, Zonaras wrote commentaries on canon law, and all the bureaucrat historians would have been well-acquainted with legal traditions and practices through their official capacities.⁹⁵ Indeed, as career administrators these writers had access to documents and texts contained in the imperial palace, including law codes and other imperial productions which continued to use the language of *politeia* throughout the medieval era.⁹⁶

The constitutionalism exhibited by such writers might therefore be seen as a literary epistemology, within which highly educated bureaucrats of modest background negotiated a place for themselves in the "Empire of Constantinople".⁹⁷ It enabled them to discursively define their role in the state as "senators", and created a point from which they could criticise imperial policy on constitutional grounds.⁹⁸ A most striking example of this process is

93 See above page 57.

94 This development witnesses an increased presence of legalism in historical works as well, see Angeliki Laiou, "Law, Justice, and the Byzantine Historians: Ninth to Twelfth Centuries," in *Law and Society in Byzantium: Ninth-Twelfth Centuries*, ed. Angeliki Laiou and Dieter Simon (Washington D.C., 1994), pp. 151–185.

95 Angeliki Laiou emphasised that these bureaucrat historians' common position as jurists and men associated with the law "must be kept in mind" when reading their historical works, see Laiou, "Law," p. 173.

96 A striking feature of the works which Kaldellis cites as using 'republican' language is the heavy weight of fifth to sixth, and eleventh to twelfth century texts, in the intervening period however the majority of cited works are imperial productions, see: Kaldellis, *Republic*.

97 This is a formula used for the empire in the Treaty of Devol, 1108, as recorded by Anna Komnene: *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. Diether Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis (Berlin, 2001), 13.12.

98 Psellos, Choniates, Attaleiates, and Zonaras consistently self-identify as "senators", and by their titles all eleventh- and twelfth-century bureaucrat historians would qualify as such. For how this self-identification fed into criticisms of the Komnenian regime see Magdalino, "*Kaiserkritik*," pp. 335–338.

found in Attaleiates' *Diataxis*, where the historian describes himself as a self-made provincial,⁹⁹ who rose to office and high honour in Constantinople:

For I did not receive any property whatsoever in the metropolis of culture, the Queen of Cities [...] [nevertheless, I, a sinner, was blessed enough] to become a member of the senate, in spite of my humble and foreign background, and to be enrolled among the elite of the senators – whom the language of old used to call 'aristocrats' [...]¹⁰⁰

This quote perfectly illustrates how constitutional discourse allowed bureaucrats such as Attaleiates and Zonaras to situate their lived experience in a meaningful framework. Subscribing to a 'senatorial' epistemology allowed them to make sense of the complex socio-political, economic, and human relationships which made up the medieval Eastern Roman Empire, all of which ran to, through, and from the City.

99 Krallis has drawn attention to the economic aspects of the *Diataxis*, and Attaleiates' remarkable definition of himself as a 'self-made' man: Krallis, *History*, pp. 1–42.

100 Compare with Prodhomos' conceptualisation above. See also Paul Gautier, "La diataxis de Michel Attaliate," *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1989), 5–143. The translation is adapted from: Alice-Mary Talbot, *The Diataxis of Michael Attaleiates*, in <http://www.doaks.org/resources/publications/doaks-online-publications/byzantine-monastic-foundation-documents/typ027.pdf> (accessed October 2014).

PART 2

Connections & Coercion



“Furnish Whatever is Lacking to Their Avarice”: The Payment Programme of Cyril of Alexandria

Walter F. Beers

Introduction*

The Nestorian controversy and the first Council of Ephesus (June–July 431) are the focus of a considerable body of source material, in the form of letters, imperial pronouncements, theological treatises, and contemporary historiography. Thus, these events should probably be ranked after only the later second Council of Ephesus and the Council of Chalcedon among the most well-documented events of the fifth century. Since the competing legacies of the two later councils were so tied up in the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria and the condemnation of ‘Nestorianism’ enshrined in the decisions of the first Council of Ephesus, the written records of the controversy and council remained a fertile source of ammunition in the hard-fought Christological conflicts of the later fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries. Hence, this material was copied, edited, reedited, and translated throughout the period. Given the exceptional quantity and immediacy of these sources, most of which were produced between the early days of the controversy in 428 and its fragile resolution in 433, it is perhaps unsurprising that some of them are unique, without ready parallels in the larger late antique context. Strikingly so are a letter and attached document associated with the correspondence of Cyril.¹

The letter and attachment are the work of Epiphanius, an otherwise untested *archidiaconus* and *syncellus* to Cyril, and they shed light on an aspect of the controversy’s negotiation and resolution entirely separate from the theological debate and rhetorical antagonism that dominate most of the sources. The letter is addressed to Maximianus, Nestorius’ replacement as bishop of

* My sincerest gratitude for their ever-helpful comments and guidance is due to Neil McLynn, Fergus Millar, Bryan Ward-Perkins, the anonymous readers at the University of Oxford, and most especially to Walter Stevenson, who inspired this paper – and much more besides.

1 *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* [hereafter *ACO*], ed. Eduard Schwartz, Johannes Straub, and Rudolf Schieffer, 4 vols (Berlin, 1914–1984), 1.4:222–225; *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters*, trans. John I. McEnerney, 2 vols [1987 (repr. Washington, D.C., 2007)], 2:151–153, 189–192.

Constantinople (*sed.* 431–34). It rebukes Maximianus for his failure to contribute to Cyril's ongoing efforts to guarantee Nestorius' deposition and secure concessions from the Antiochene bishops, and urges him to contribute to the business of fostering support for Cyril in the imperial court. According to Epiphanius, Cyril has been struck down by a recurring illness, and is therefore unable to write to Maximianus himself. The tone of the letter is blunt and contrasts with Cyril's own, usually measured style. More surprising than its tone, however, are the letter's frank references to the pecuniary side of Cyril's negotiations with the imperial court. This theme is further emphasized by the attachment, a list of payments or bribes to be distributed to various members of the imperial *cubicula* and the civil administration. The list mentions seventeen recipients by name and/or title, and the payments themselves include not only a total of 1,080 pounds of gold, but also various valuable textile and furniture items in considerable quantities.

Epiphanius' work survives in a single manuscript, in a Latin translation of the Greek original.² This manuscript is the sole extant complete copy of a Latin edition of conciliar *acta*, the *Synodicon*, compiled during the Three Chapters controversy (*c.* 565) by Rusticus *diaconus*, a nephew of Pope Vigilius (*sed.* 537–55). After the second Council of Constantinople (553), Rusticus was exiled for refusing to condemn the Three Chapters. His sentence was eventually revoked, however, and he returned from exile to Constantinople and the library of the monastery of the Acoemetes in 563, where he composed the *Synodicon*.³ He had access, presumably in the Acoemetes' library, to a copy of the *Tragoedia* of Irenaeus of Tyre, an earlier collection of *acta* and related documents compiled in the immediate aftermath of the Nestorian controversy. During the controversy, Irenaeus had been serving as a military *comes*, and had close ties to the Antiochene ecclesiastical network that included Nestorius, Ioannes of Antioch, and Theodoret of Cyrrhus.⁴ He accompanied Nestorius to the council in 431, and subsequently played an important role in the Antiochene party's efforts to defend their actions at Ephesus.⁵ In consequence, he was

² *ACO*, 1.4:v–viii.

³ *ACO*, 1.4:viii–x; *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, trans. Richard Price and Michael Gaddis, 3 vols (Liverpool, 2005), 1:84–85.

⁴ John R. Martindale, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, Vol. 2: 395–527 [hereafter, *PLRE*] (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 624–625, “Irenaeus 2”. See also Adam M. Schor, *Theodoret's People: Social Networks and Religious Conflict in Late Roman Syria* (Berkeley, 2011), p. 30; *ACO*, 1.4:xi.

⁵ John A. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: The Christological Controversy: Its History, Theology, and Texts* [Leiden, 1994 (repr. Crestwood, N.Y., 2004)], pp. 52, 54–55, 79–80, 92, 94, 98; Schor, *Theodoret's People*, pp. 86–88.

exiled to Petra in 436, where he remained until c. 443 when Ioannes' successor Domnus ordained him bishop of Tyre.⁶ It was presumably during this exile that he composed the *Tragoedia*. In the work Irenaeus included an impressive array of primary documents intended to bolster his own account of the controversy. Rusticus later copied Irenaeus' primary material into the *Synodicon*, but largely excised his commentary; thus, unfortunately, Irenaeus' work can only partially be recovered. Nevertheless, it is clear from what survives of the *Tragoedia* in the *Synodicon* that Irenaeus viewed Ioannes of Antioch's decision to reconcile with Cyril in 433 as a betrayal, and intended his work as a polemic against Cyril and his allies. It is clearly significant that Irenaeus placed Epiphanius' letter and list out of chronological sequence, at the very end of the *Tragoedia*. The two documents were intended to be the final piece of evidence in his indictment of the bishop of Alexandria.⁷

Modern scholars have not overlooked Epiphanius' work. Most notably, the letter and list have been discussed by Fergus Millar, Christopher Kelly, Peter Brown, Kenneth G. Holum, and A. H. M. Jones, who have each analysed the documents in the context of discussions of the Nestorian controversy and of the norms of power and influence in late antiquity.⁸ Nevertheless, the letter and list have not been the focus of a detailed study since that of Pierre Batiffol, published in 1911.⁹ Thus the time is ripe for a reanalysis of Epiphanius' work that takes into account more recent research on late antique influence networks, power and access in the imperial bureaucracy, and the creation and reuse of the primary sources of the Nestorian controversy. Through a more sustained focus on this exceptional pair of documents, we can gain a valuable new perspective on payment for influence, negotiations between ecclesiastical and imperial courts, and the use of primary documents as religious propaganda in late antiquity.

6 ACO, 1.4:xi, p. 203.

7 As noted by Fergus Millar in his *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408–450)* (Berkeley, 2011), pp. 170, 221.

8 Millar, *Greek Roman Empire*, pp. 170–171, 219–221; Christopher Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), pp. 171–172; Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison, Wis., 1992), pp. 15–17; Kenneth G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1982), pp. 179–183; A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1964), 1:346.

9 Pierre Batiffol, "Les présents de saint Cyrille a la cour de Constantinople," *Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétienne* 1 (1911), 247–264 passim; repr. in Batiffol, *Études de liturgie et d'archéologie chrétienne* (Paris, 1919), pp. 154–179.

The Late Antique Influence Economy

Payment – both in specie and in kind – played a prominent role in the late antique imperial bureaucracy, in its local, provincial, and central manifestations.¹⁰ Appointments and promotions, as well as administrative and judicial services, were often secured and facilitated by payments both to the pertinent administrators themselves, and to influence-purveying middlemen.¹¹ The limitations of our sources mean that it is essentially impossible to determine whether the increased prominence of such practices in late antiquity reflects changes in the way payment for influence, bribery, and venality were viewed by the citizens of the empire. It may simply be that the growing scale of such activities was pursuant upon the bureaucratization of the imperial administrative apparatus that began in the later third century.¹² Similarly, it is extremely difficult to generalize about the way in which such practices were viewed across socio-political and economic boundaries. However, as Christopher Kelly has argued, it is clear that the role played by such payments in the late antique influence economy represented a serious challenge to established networks of patronage, and to the social elites who relied upon them.¹³ Furthermore, the imperial government clearly recognized the value of such practices, both as a form of indirect taxation, and as a straightforward mechanism for limiting the demands placed on the administrative structure. Legislative standardization of the fees paid for services, appointments, and promotions thus should not be seen as feeble attempts to limit systemic corruption, but rather as strategic efforts to limit the potential abuses of both payment and patronage systems.¹⁴

Thus, Kelly suggests, contemporary condemnations of such payment practices as bribery should not be taken at face value, but rather read in the context of conflicts between those who depended on patronage networks, and

¹⁰ Kelly, *Ruling the Empire*, pp. 138–139, 275 (footnote 1).

¹¹ For an extensive dossier of source material, see Ramsey MacMullen, *Corruption and the Decline of Rome* (New Haven, 1988), pp. 122–170 passim. MacMullen attempts to make the case for systemic corruption tending towards decline, but his interpretation is idiosyncratic at best. For a much-needed corrective, see Bryan Ward-Perkins, Review of *Corruption and the Decline of Rome*, by Ramsey MacMullen, *Journal of Roman Studies* 83 (1993), 264–266.

¹² Sam Barnish, A. D. Lee, and Michael Whitby, “Government and Administration,” in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. 14: Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, AD 425–600*, ed. Averil Cameron, Bryan Ward-Perkins, and Michael Whitby (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 187–188.

¹³ Kelly, *Ruling the Empire*, pp. 165–173.

¹⁴ Kelly, *Ruling the Empire*, pp. 138–165.

those who had successfully circumvented the established patronage system by means of strategic payments.¹⁵ Denunciations of both buyers and sellers of influence and office should be seen in the context of established rhetorical techniques of defamation. In reality, the relative ethical status of the competing methods employed in the influence economy was seldom as clear-cut as some contemporary sources suggest. Both payment and patronage were tools available to those interacting with or involved in the imperial administration, and were combined as often as they competed with each other.¹⁶

Nor was the ecclesiastical sphere free from such payments, or the conflict that they often engendered. Ecclesiastical and even secular legislation repeatedly attempted to curtail the sale and purchase of episcopal offices, which had become more and more valuable as a consequence of the increasing socio-economic prestige and benefits of the episcopacy.¹⁷ This practice was sufficiently endemic by the reign of Justinian that he addressed it in his legislative efforts to regulate and limit the sale of offices. Although customary fees were permitted when paid to the appropriate members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, undue influence and the corruption of electors were to be severely punished.¹⁸ In an ecclesiastical context, such activities were even more open to condemnation, since they could be easily characterized as simony, the sale of the sacred. Such accusations were frequent, even commonplace, especially in the context of disputed episcopal elections.¹⁹ Again, it is frequently impossible to disentangle rhetoric from reality with respect to these accusations. Condemnations of abuse probably sometimes reflect real corruption, but the customary fees permitted by Justinian suggest that the practice was acceptable to a degree in the ecclesiastical context, just as it was in the secular.

If an analysis of Epiphanius' letter and list is to move beyond condemnations of administrative corruption and venality, it must be made in the context of an understanding of the often ambivalent nature of payment for influence in the late antique world.²⁰ To a great extent payment was a normalized and accepted tool employed by those who were involved in, or interacted with

15 Kelly, *Ruling the Empire*, pp. 181–185.

16 Kelly, *Ruling the Empire*, pp. 173–181.

17 Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250–600: Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 177–191.

18 Justinian, *Novellae*, 123.3 places caps on such customary payments, scaled to match the income of the see. See also Kelly, *Ruling the Empire*, pp. 163–164; Norton, *Episcopal Elections*, pp. 183–84.

19 Norton, *Episcopal Elections*, pp. 184–86.

20 E.g., Batiffol, “Les présents,” pp. 173–74.

administrative bureaucracies, both secular and ecclesiastical, and was often employed in conjunction with other tools of facilitation and persuasion. Nevertheless, surviving rhetorical denunciations of payment practices suggest that their authors believed that audiences would be receptive to such condemnations. Receptiveness no doubt depended on such factors as the audience's opinions of, and allegiances to the parties involved in the exchange under consideration.

It is important, however, to stress the exceptional nature of Epiphanius' work. Cyril's payments are not intended to facilitate or expedite the normal functions of the imperial administration, nor, with the exception of his hope that Lausus might replace Chryseros as *praepositus sacri cubiculi*, are they intended to prejudice the emperor's appointment of officials.²¹ In fact, with the exception of the *magister officiorum*, who might be identified with Ioannes, the former *comes sacrarum largitionum* who had led Theodosius' efforts to restore order in Ephesus during the council, none of the figures mentioned in the letter and list are directly connected to imperial involvement in the controversy.²² Rather, Epiphanius' work illustrates where he and/or Cyril felt that real power and influence was to be found in the imperial court – with high-ranking administrators such as the *magister officiorum*, the *praefectus praetorio*, and the *quaestor*, but also with the officials and staff of the imperial *cubicula*, with servants, and in one case, even an official's wife. Tellingly, the amounts of the payments do not seem to reflect the rank of the recipient, so much as the advantages of securing him or her as an ally.

Perhaps the closest parallel to Cyril's activities appears in the fifth-century *vita* of Melania the Younger.²³ The *vita* records a visit by Melania to the court of Honorius and her audience with the emperor's mother-in-law, Serena.²⁴ In an effort to secure an imperial order protecting her property from confiscation by relatives, Melania brought with her "precious ornaments of great value and crystal vases as gifts for the pious empress, and other ornaments, such as rings, silver, and silken garments to give to the faithful eunuchs and court officers".²⁵ Serena, however, refused the saint's gifts and made the *praeposi-*

21 ACO, 1.4:223, line 39–224, line 2; see also below, p. 77.

22 See note 68.

23 This parallel has been noted by Kelly, *Ruling the Empire*, pp. 179–180, and Batiffol, "Les présents," pp. 175–176.

24 Gerontius, *Vita S. Melaniae iunioris*, ed. and trans. Denys Gorce (Paris, 1962), pp. 10–15; *The Life of Melania, the Younger*, trans. Elizabeth A. Clark (New York, 1984), pp. 33–39.

25 Gerontius, *Vita S. Melaniae iunioris*, p. 11, lines 39–42: "λαβοῦσα δὲ κόσμια τιμῆς οὐκ ὀλίγης ἄξια καὶ κανθάρους κρυσταλλίνους δώρων ἔνεκεν τῆς εὐσεβοῦς βασιλίδος, καὶ ἕτερα πάλιν κόσμια ἔν τε δακτυλίοις καὶ ἀργύρῳ καὶ ἐσθῆτι σηρικῇ ὥστε παρασχεῖν τοῖς πιστοῖς εὐνούχοις καὶ ἄρχουσιν [...]" See also Clark, *The Life of Melania*, pp. 34–35.

tus promise that no one else would accept them.²⁶ This last detail serves to ameliorate Melania's actions, making the story more appropriate to its hagiographic context. Nevertheless, Melania is furthering her cause by essentially the same method as Cyril employs; an exceptional request is accompanied by exceptional gifts, delivered not to the emperor himself, but to those whom the saint expects will best be able to see that her plea is received favourably by the emperor.

Outside of the idealized world of hagiography, however, it was more difficult to present a payment programme as exceptional as Cyril's in a positive light. In the *vita* Melania refers to her offerings as εὐλογίαι, or 'blessings'.²⁷ Epiphanius seems to have used the same word in the original Greek letter and list.²⁸ As Daniel Caner has argued, however, by the fifth century the word εὐλογία already had an established meaning in hagiographical contexts, where it referred to a purely disinterested charitable or sacerdotal gift.²⁹ Since Cyril's payments are clearly not disinterested gifts, in Epiphanius' usage the term becomes a rather disingenuous euphemism.³⁰ To him, and perhaps to Cyril and Maximianus as well, Cyril's payment programme stretched beyond the boundaries of that which was *consuetudinarium*, and made Cyril vulnerable to charges of bribery and corruption.

The Letter

From the summer of 432 through April of 433, Cyril, Ioannes of Antioch, and the imperial court represented by the *tribunus et notarius* Aristolaus pursued negotiations that ultimately led to the acceptance of the so-called Formula of Reunion by both bishops.³¹ Epiphanius' letter refers to the continuing presence in Alexandria of both Aristolaus and Paulus of Emesa, Ioannes' representative,

26 Gerontius, *Vita S. Melaniae iunioris*, p. 13, lines 1–16.

27 Gerontius, *Vita S. Melaniae iunioris*, p. 13, line 5.

28 In Rusticus' Latin, *eulogiae* is used interchangeably with *benedictiones*: see *ACO*, 1.4:223, line 29; 224, line 39 (*eulogiae*); 224, line 28 (*eulogiae consuetudinariae*); 223, line 7, 13, 17 (*benedictiones*). See also *ACO* 1.3:210, 218.

29 See Daniel F. Caner, "Alms, Blessings, Offerings: The Repertoire of Christian Gifts in Early Byzantium," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. Michael L. Satlow (Chichester, 2013), pp. 30–37. At p. 33, table 3.2, Caner classifies Melania's gifts as hospitality gifts, which is perhaps over-generous.

30 For another instance of εὐλογίαι in this sense, see Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. Carl de Boor [Leipzig, 1883 (repr. Hildesheim, 1963)], A.M. 5940.

31 For reconstructions of these negotiations, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, pp. 110–15, and Schor, *Theodoret's People*, pp. 91–93.

as well as to letters that Paulus had brought with him from Ioannes.³² It also makes reference to a further exchange between Ioannes and Aristolaus, which communicated the decisions of a recent synod at Antioch and the imminent arrival of another envoy from Ioannes, a bishop Alexander, with a “definite formula”.³³ For whatever reason, this Alexander seems never to have arrived, since he is not mentioned in the other sources that attest to the negotiations. Epiphanius makes no mention, however, of Paulus’ decision to condemn Nestorius, commune with Cyril, and preach in Alexandria on Christmas Day of 432. Thus the letter should probably be dated to the autumn or early winter of that year.³⁴

The letter hints that Cyril found Aristolaus’ continued presence in Alexandria odious, and it is clear that the *tribunus*’ imperial mandate allowed him to put considerable pressure on the bishop. Epiphanius says that when Cyril received the Antiochenes’ initial demands, requiring that he repudiate his own writings, he was at first unwilling to negotiate. Aristolaus, however, “urged on him that he should carry out things divinely sanctioned”, and Cyril “of necessity” agreed to negotiate. Provided that the Antiochenes condemned Nestorius, he would accept that Ioannes’ previous actions had been simply misplaced “zeal and ardour towards our Lord”.³⁵ Presumably, as long as Aristolaus stayed in Alexandria the pressure to negotiate remained strong. This may explain Cyril’s recurring illness, which was probably as much a play for time as a genuine ailment.³⁶ While he stalled, Cyril depended on his agents in the capital, Philippus and Claudianus, and on Maximianus to

32 ACO 1.4:222, line 15–223, line 4. One of the letter’s primary concerns is to secure Aristolaus’ departure from Alexandria (p. 223, line 2–3). For Paulus’ communications from Ioannes, see p. 222, lines 31–34.

33 This probably refers to Alexander of Apamea. At this point Ioannes was no longer on friendly terms with Alexander of Hierapolis: Schor, *Theodoret’s People*, pp. 92–93.

34 The events leading up to Paulus’ Christmas Day sermon cannot be dated exactly, but for a detailed relative chronology, see the works cited in note 31 above.

35 ACO, 1.4:222, lines 21–27: “*ammirandissimus autem tribunus Aristolaus insistebat ei ut diuinitus sancita perageret. et hox ex necessitate disposuit per omnia sanctissimus dominus meus Cyrillus ut eius quidem sanctitas anathemate interposito dicat quod non circa haereticum intellectum haec ipsa exposuerit, sed quicquid et uidetur reprehensibile esse, zelo et calore circa dominum nostrum Iesum Christum [...], dictum est, Orientales autem cuncti anathematizent Nestorium eiusque sententiam et ita suscipiantur ad pacem.*” The translation is McEnerney’s (*Letters*, p. 189).

36 Epiphanius mentions two occurrences of the illness, one after Paulus’ arrival in Alexandria, and one after negotiations with Paulus (and Ioannes) had stalled (ACO 1.4:222, line 33; 223, line 4) – both suspiciously well-timed.

employ their contacts to secure Aristolaus' departure and a lessening of imperial pressure.³⁷ Epiphanius even requests that Maximianus make both Aristolaus' wife and the holy man Eutyches write to urge Aristolaus to action – presumably, action away from Alexandria.³⁸

The letter also responds to some unsettling news that Cyril has received from Constantinople. “The things which rather often have been written to us by your holiness were not so full of disorder as the things which now have been sent to my lord Cyril”, Epiphanius remarks, and this disorder is made the primary reason for his complaints about Maximianus' inactivity.³⁹ Epiphanius repeatedly emphasizes Cyril's disappointment over Maximianus' failure to contribute to the task at hand, and stresses that the Alexandrian clergy and even Aristolaus share that disappointment.⁴⁰ He also implies that Cyril's budget is overtaxed because Maximianus is not pulling his weight where the payment campaign is concerned.⁴¹ Twice Maximianus is urged to distribute payments – once to “all who are in the palace”, and again to “those whom you have known”, which is perhaps meant to indicate the members of Maximianus' network as distinct from Cyril's.⁴² Nevertheless, Epiphanius is not explicit about the nature of the disorder in the city that has upset Cyril. It does seem, however, to be tied up with Cyril's primary enemy in the capital, the *praepositus* Chryseros, who was perhaps exercising a contrary influence on Theodosius.⁴³

The recipients of payments will be discussed below, but a few points are worth noting here. Although an unnamed *augusta*, presumably Pulcheria, is mentioned in the list, she is not named as a recipient.⁴⁴ Likewise, there is no discussion of any other members of the imperial family receiving payments. This might suggest that such a transaction was inappropriate to the imperial

37 ACO, 1.4:223, line 1–4: [...] *et quia insuper et cum domino Philippo et domno Claudiano non curam dederis quomodo hinc exire faciatis Aristolaum clarissimum uirum* [...]. Philippus and Claudianus cannot be otherwise identified.

38 ACO, 1.4:223, lines 38–39: *roget itaque sanctitas tua domnam iugalem eius ut scribat ei rogans illum ut perfecte laboret et ut reuerentissimus Eutyches scribat ei*.

39 ACO, 1.4:222, lines 9–11: *quae nobis saepius a tua scripta sunt sanctitate, non erant ita perturbatione plena sicut qua nunc transmissa sunt domino meo omnia sanctissimo sanctitatis uestrae fratri Cyrillo*. The translation is McEnerney's (*Letters*, p. 188).

40 ACO, 1.4:222, lines 14–15; 223, lines 3–4, 27–29, 31–32, 33–38.

41 ACO, 1.4:223, lines 29–32.

42 ACO, 1.4:223, lines 16, 33–34.

43 The influence exercised over Theodosius by the court eunuchs Antiochus and Chrysaphius is well attested: *PLRE*, pp. 101–102, “Antiochus 5”; pp. 295–297. It is not difficult to imagine that Chryseros was playing a similar role at this time.

44 ACO, 1.4:224, lines 10–11.

dignity, or, rather, that it was too sensitive to commit to writing. The first possibility is unlikely, given the evidence of the *Vita S. Melaniae iunioris*. The second is perhaps more plausible, but if so then the letter is not as circumspect as the list. After listing those whom Cyril has contacted, including Pulcheria, Epiphanius simply says: “worthy blessings have been dispatched to them.”⁴⁵ If Pulcheria was also a beneficiary of Cyril’s payments, as this statement suggests, perhaps it was merely inappropriate to reproduce a record of what she had received. It will be seen below that Epiphanius is also rather vague about the high-ranking civil officials mentioned on the list, perhaps for similar reasons.

The *comes* Ammonius is also noteworthy.⁴⁶ The amount of gold due to him (1,500 pounds) is the only specific amount mentioned in the letter, and is significantly larger than the total of the amounts mentioned in the list (1,080 pounds). Thus, whatever service he was expected to perform for Cyril must have been an exceptional one. Epiphanius expects Maximianus to know the task assigned to Ammonius; he is asked to encourage Ammonius to contact Cyril.⁴⁷

The letter also mentions two monks, Dalmatius and Eutyches.⁴⁸ Dalmatius was the archimandrite of a prominent Constantinopolitan monastery, and had already served well as the leader of Cyril’s monastic supporters in the capital.⁴⁹ The Home Synod would later condemn Eutyches for miaphysite heresy in 448, and his cause would become the catalyst for the second Council of Ephesus. Hence, it is unsurprising to find him here acting as Cyril’s ally.⁵⁰ The letter also refers to Eulogius the *presbyter*.⁵¹ This Eulogius was the recipient of one

45 ACO, 1.4:223, lines 7–8: [...] *et directae sunt benedictiones dignae eis*. The translation in McEnerney’s (*Letters*, p. 190).

46 PLRE, p. 71, “Ammonius 3”. Ammonius is unattested elsewhere.

47 ACO, 1.4:223, lines 32–33, 35–36: [...] *et debet praeter illa quae hinc transmissa sunt, Ammonio comiti auri libras mille quingentas et nunc ei denuo scriptum est ut praestet [...] ut nosti, loquere Ammonio comiti et suadat ei ea quae scit religiositas tua, et fac illum scribere hic, ne sit etiam de hoc tristitia*.

48 ACO, 1.4:223, lines 23–26, 38–39.

49 Susan Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 163–167; Timothy E. Gregory, *Vox Populi: Popular Opinion and Violence in the Religious Controversies of the Fifth Century A.D.* (Columbus, Ohio, 1979), pp. 108–112; Gilbert Dagron, “Les moines et la ville: le monachisme à Constantinople jusqu’au concile de Chalcédoine,” *Travaux et mémoires* 4 (1970), pp. 266–270.

50 Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, p. 279 (footnote 95); Dagron, “Les moines et la ville,” pp. 270–272.

51 ACO, 1.4:223, line 26–9.

of Cyril's own letters, instructing him to distribute Cyrilline theological tracts in the capital.⁵²

The letter ends with a suggestion as to how Chryseros might be outmanoeuvred. If Pulcheria can be convinced to help Cyril's cause, she may have Chryseros replaced by Lausus, who would suit Cyril better in the position closest to the emperor's ear.⁵³ This Lausus should presumably be identified with the Lausus who had already served as *praepositus* in 420.⁵⁴

The List

The degree of detail incorporated in the list makes it seem very unlikely that it was written out exclusively for Maximianus' benefit. Rather, Epiphanius must have edited a previously composed list or collection of records kept among Cyril's accounts, in order to produce a version suitable for his exchange with Maximianus. The keeping of such records might have simply been good accounting practice; these expenditures must have represented a significant portion of Cyril's budget. Alternatively, as the list's final sentence suggests, the amounts kept on record were only to be delivered when the members of Cyril's network did their part in pursuit of the bishop's aims.⁵⁵ The potential recipients themselves might have been made aware of what they stood to gain from cooperation with Cyril, or perhaps Cyril's agents were informed via another version of the list what amounts they were authorized to distribute to individual cooperators.⁵⁶

Unfortunately, the majority of the recipients on the list are unattested in other source material, and so nothing more is known about them beyond their names and/or positions and ranks, as mentioned in the list. Three, Artabas, Ruphinus, and Eustathius, are only named.⁵⁷ Despite the paucity of corroborative information, however, an impressively detailed picture of Cyril's network

52 CPG 5344 = 44 in McEnerney, *Letters* = ACO, 1.1.4:35–37 = *Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters*, trans. Lionel R. Wickham (Oxford, 1983), pp. 62–69.

53 ACO, 1.4:223, line 39–224, line 2.

54 PLRE, pp. 660–61, “Lausus 1, 2, 3”.

55 See below, p. 79.

56 Brown, *Power and Persuasion*, pp. 15–17.

57 Most of the otherwise unattested recipients are catalogued in PLRE; Eustathius, who is not catalogued, might perhaps be identified with Eustathius, PPO 420–22, cos. 421, p. 436, “Eustathius 12”. For Artabas and Ruphinus, see below pp. 78–79.

in the *cubicula* and at court can still be recovered from the information contained in the list.⁵⁸

The first section of the list, since it includes *cubiculariae* who are to exert their influence on Pulcheria, seems to concern her *cubiculum*.⁵⁹ Thus, Paulus (50 lb of gold) must be the *praepositus augustae*; his unnamed *domesticus* is also a recipient (100 *solidi* \approx 1.3 lb).⁶⁰ Two *cubiculariae*, Marcella and Droseria, are mentioned (50 lb each).⁶¹ The list then moves on the *cubiculum augusti*, starting with the *praepositus* Chryseros (200 lb). Chryseros' *domesticus* Solomonus is also to intercede with him (for 50 lb).⁶² The text names three more *cubicularii*, presumably the emperor's: Romanus (30 lb), Domninus (50 lb), and Scholasticus (100 lb); Scholasticus' *domesticus*, Theodorus, is to receive 50 lb.⁶³

In the midst of the discussion of the emperor's *cubiculum*, the text turns to the *praefectus praetorio* and his household.⁶⁴ The unnamed *praefectus* is not given as a recipient, but his wife Heleniana (100 lb) and his *assessor* Florentius (50 lb) are to attempt to influence him. In fact, the *praefectus* may be the otherwise unidentified Ruphinus who is named as a recipient in the following section.⁶⁵ This final section returns to civil officials;⁶⁶ presumably 'the most magnificent' Artabas (100 lb) was in this category.⁶⁷ The *magister officiorum*,

58 For a summary of the following discussion of the recipients and a complete list of the amounts given for each recipient, see table 4.1.

59 For the *praepositus augustae*, see Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, p. 131 (footnote 85), pp. 191–192.

60 Only the payments in gold are given here, since they are the more useful point of comparison. For the payments in kind, see table 4.1.

61 *ACO*, 1.4:224, lines 4–13.

62 *ACO*, 1.4:224, lines 14–23.

63 *ACO*, 1.4:224, line 29; 225, line 2. Romanus served as *PSC* (before 451) and was present at four sessions of Chalcedon: *PLRE*, p. 947, "Romanus 3". Domninus is named in an inscription from Mylasa: p. 373, "Domninus 2". Scholasticus, *comes* and *castrensis sac. pal.* (422), is attested in other letters preserved in the conciliar *acta* and in the *Codex Theodosianus*: p. 982, "Scholasticus 2".

64 *ACO*, 1.4:224, lines 24–27. The shift in subject is presumably made so as to minimize the repetitions of identical lists of items.

65 Pace *PLRE*, p. 953, "Rufinus 9", whose interpretation requires assuming the text of the list to be corrupt, the *praefectus* should probably be identified with Rufinus, *PPO* March 431/ March 432 (p. 953, "Rufinus 8"). Malalas identifies this Rufinus as a relative of Theodosius, which might explain Cyril's particular interest in him and his wife: Ioannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. Hans Thurn (Berlin, 2000), 14.18.

66 *ACO*, 1.4:225, lines 3–9.

67 Pace *PLRE*, p. 154, Artabas should probably be identified as a civil official and not a *cubicularius*. The list is elsewhere vague only in its identification of civil officials.

also unnamed, is to receive 100 lb; his unnamed *domesticus* receives the same amount as Ruphinus.⁶⁸ The *quaestor*, again unnamed, is to receive 100 lb also; his *domesticus* Ablabius receives the same amount as the unidentified Eustathius.⁶⁹

The sense of the list's final sentence is somewhat vague.⁷⁰ It seems that the "most reverend clerics" to whom Cyril has written are his agents in the city. These men have been supplied with some version of the list so that they can appropriately reward any of Cyril's contacts who have acted "by zeal for my lord's holiness and according to the will or counsel of the lords Philippus and Claudianus". Thus, "if anything has been done [...] and what is useful has been successfully obtained", then "all these things are intended" for the recipients, as listed.⁷¹ In other words, Cyril is concerned with results; if anyone in his network not only exercises his or her influence on Cyril's behalf, but also makes progress towards the desired goal, then they will be rewarded according to the amounts given in the list. Philippus and Claudianus appear here in the position of mediators between Cyril's clerics, who are in charge of the actual distribution, and the members of Cyril's network, whom they direct and encourage according to Cyril's wishes.

Conclusion

As Christopher Kelly has noted, one of the most problematic aspects of the list – and what made it such an appropriate final piece of evidence in Irenaeus' *Tragoedia* – is the enormous quantity of goods and money involved. The list specifies 1,080 pounds of gold, or 77,760 *solidi*, as well as 867 textile and furniture items.⁷² An additional 1,500 pounds (108,000 *solidi*) are owed to the *comes*

68 The *magister officiorum* should probably be identified with Ioannes: *PLRE*, p. 596, "Ioannes 12". Ioannes directed imperial efforts to restore order at Ephesus, first as *CSL*.

69 The *quaestor* might be Domitianus: *PLRE*, p. 370, "Domitianus 4". For Eustathius, see note 57 above.

70 *ACO*, 1.4:225, lines 9–11: "*scriptum uero est a fratre uestro reuerentissimis clericis ut si quid fuerit actum studio sanctitatis domini mei et uoluntate uel consilio domni Philippi et domni Claudiani et id quod opus est, impetrari contigerit, destinentur haec omnia.*" McEnerney's translation in *Letters*, p. 153 is unclear and improbable, so I give my own, for which I am indebted to Neil McLynn.

71 I.e. protasis perfect subjunctive (*fuerit, contigerit*), apodosis present subjunctive (*destinentur*).

72 Plus further unspecified amounts and not including Paulus' *domesticus*' modest 1.3 lb of gold. Brown gives the 1,080 lb. of gold as "the equivalent of the annual stipends of

Ammonius. Although Epiphanius' claim that these payments were bankrupting the church of Alexandria is probably rhetorical, there is no denying that they represent considerable sums of money.⁷³

A partial explanation for these exceptionally large sums is suggested by another letter preserved by Irenaeus, from Acacius of Beroea to Alexander of Hierapolis.⁷⁴ In this letter, Acacius claims that upon the death of a palace eunuch named Scholasticus, examination of his effects revealed a note recording that he had received "many pounds of gold" from Cyril via the latter's nephew, the *comes consistorianus* Paulus.⁷⁵ Similar payments, Acacius says, had been distributed to "diverse persons".⁷⁶ The letter seems to date from the autumn or winter of 431.⁷⁷ If it refers to the same *cubicularius* Scholasticus who is included in the list, then he had been dead for about a year when Epiphanius wrote to Maximianus.⁷⁸ This suggests the payments enumerated in the list were distributed over a long period of time, reaching back at least to late 431.

Acacius' story is further corroborated, albeit indirectly, by Theodoret of Cyrrhus. During a series of theological debates between representatives of the two factions, held after the council in September and October of 431 in Chalcedon, Theodoret reported back to Syria, in another letter to Alexander of Hierapolis. He took a pessimistic view of the ongoing debates, remarking that "no good is to be hoped from it, in as much as all the judges are fully satisfied by gold, and contend that the nature of the Godhead and manhood is one."⁷⁹ This is clearly meant to imply that the imperial representatives were

38 bishops or of a year's food and clothing for 19,000 poor persons": Brown, *Power and Persuasion*, p. 16.

73 For a further sense of scale, see Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 2:904–906 and Michael F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300–1450* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 201–204.

74 *ACO*, 1.4:85, line 13–86, line 6; Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, p. 262 (footnote 25).

75 *PLRE*, p. 850, "Paulus 9".

76 *ACO*, 1.4:85, lines 28–33: "*nam postquam mortuus est Scholasticus eunuchus, piissimus imperator res eius inquirens et aurum, quod reliquerat infinitum, inuenit ypomnisticum continens quia multas auri libras acceperit a Cyrillo. hoc uero aurum tradebatur a Paulo quodam filio fratris Cyrilli Alexandrini, qui illic comes erat consistorianorum, praeter alia munera quae in uariis speciebus diuersis sunt oblata personis.*" The translations are my own.

77 Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, pp. 262–263.

78 *PLRE*, p. 982, "Scholasticus 1", and note 63 above. Scholasticus is not attested after 432.

79 *ACO*, 1.1.7:80, lines 12–14: "...οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐλπίζειν χρηστὸν ἐντεῦθεν τῷ πάντας πληροφορηθῆναι τῷ χρυσῷ καὶ φιλονεικεῖν αὐτοὺς τοὺς κριτὰς μίαν εἶναι φύσιν θεότητος καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος. Translation modified from *Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series*,

already on Cyril's payroll. If Theodoret's report reflects the reality of the situation, then payments were already being distributed before the end of October – in fact, while Cyril himself was still under house arrest in Ephesus.⁸⁰ On the other hand, the list's vague final sentence, which must be Epiphanius' editorial comment, could be interpreted to mean that only some of the amounts had yet been distributed, and others depended on the future cooperation of Cyril's contacts. In the absence of other corroborative sources like Acacius and Theodoret, it is impossible to do more than speculate.

The second major problem presented by Epiphanius' work is the question of why and how it made its way into relatively public circulation. Although Cyril and Epiphanius clearly felt that Cyril's extraordinary payment campaign was justifiable under the circumstances of the ongoing controversy – and for the sake of the defence of orthodoxy – it nevertheless made Cyril vulnerable to attack. Information, especially such detailed information, about Cyril's payments could serve as an extremely potent weapon for Cyril's enemies. Hence, Cyril would certainly not have been unconcerned about the security of the information contained in the list. If the interpretation of the original purpose of the list elaborated above is correct, it must have been distributed in some form to Cyril's agents in the capital. Perhaps in this earlier form the information was not collected into a single, highly incriminating document, but sent out from Alexandria piecemeal, through various channels. This would have lessened the chance of any of Cyril's enemies gaining access to more than a portion of the information – as Acacius had done.

If so, the choice to collate these potentially scandalous promissory notes into a single dangerous document, which was then passed outside of Cyril's trusted network to Maximianus, is a surprising one. Certain ambiguities noted above in the sections of the list referring to civil officials – unspecified amounts, missing and disconnected names – suggest that Epiphanius made some effort to soften the incriminating potential of the list. Nevertheless, enough detail was preserved to cause embarrassment to several of Cyril's most prominent allies, as well as to severely damage Cyril's own public image. It is possible that the list was given to Maximianus with the intent that he should use the information within it to encourage Cyril's supporters. If this was the case, then Epiphanius' excuse about Cyril's illness might serve to maintain plausible deniability on Cyril's part, in the event that the list made it into the wrong hands. Alternatively, if the story about Cyril's illness was true, then the

ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, 14 vols (New York, 1890–1900), 3:341. See also Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, p. 258 (footnote 9).

80 Cyril left Ephesus on 31 October: McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, pp. 104–107.

dispatch of the list to Maximianus might represent a strategic error committed by an employee with considerably less diplomatic acumen than Cyril himself. It is clear from Cyril's other extant correspondence that copies of letters, theological pamphlets, and even documents for signature were regularly attached to or included within the text of his letters.⁸¹ Hence, Epiphanius, lacking explicit instructions from Cyril, might merely have been attempting to employ the bishop's normal methods of communication and persuasion.

Ultimately, the story behind the letter and list must remain unknown, as also must the means by which they came into Irenaeus' possession. Despite these unanswered questions, however, it is clear that Cyril's payment programme, as represented by the list, did not fall safely within the bounds of the customary and acceptable employment of payment in the late antique influence economy. The concern for circumspection evident in Epiphanius' editing of the list, his employment of the term *εὐλογίαί*, and the deniability established by the story of Cyril's illness, strongly suggest that Cyril and his allies did not wish the details of their financial arrangements with the court to be made public. Likewise, the way in which Irenaeus deployed the letter and list in the *Tragoedia* suggests that he regarded payments on the scale of Cyril's programme to be beyond the acceptable norms of lobbying. In the absence of Irenaeus' commentary, it may be imagined that he employed the same invective *topoi* that can be found in other contemporary condemnations of bribery and venality. Nevertheless, the prominence given to the documents at the very climax of Irenaeus' work, with all their incriminating detail of names and amounts, shows that he saw them as much more than a springboard for invective. This attitude is further borne out by the disapproval inherent in the complaints made by Acacius and Theodoret. Neither of their letters indulges in rhetoric; they are simply reporting evidence of Cyril's misdeeds. This is not to suggest that they did not recognize the rhetorical potential of information about Cyril's secret activities, as Cyril and Epiphanius had, but they also saw this evidence of bribery as genuinely condemning Cyril's cause. It is therefore clear that Cyril's payment programme made him and his network vulnerable to attack; hence they strove to keep this aspect of his campaign for influence secret. Likewise, when those secrets were leaked, the Antiochenes recognized them as powerful ammunition in the ongoing conflict. Cyril's programme, however justifiable it may have been to him and his allies, was something that could be and was condemned in a public context. The letter and list

81 E.g., *CPG* 5333, 34, 36, 38, 39 (33, 34, 36, 38, 39 in McEnerney, *Letters*). Cf. also Cyril's letter cited in note 52 above, in which Eulogius is instructed to distribute copies of letters and treatises in the capital.

provide clear evidence that Cyril was taking a calculated risk in his efforts to seek favour at court. A programme of influence-seeking as exceptional as that detailed in these documents brought with it potential accusations of bribery and corruption.

TABLE 4.1 *Recipients named in Epiphanius’ list* (ACO, 1.4:224–25)

<i>Cubicularii</i>		
– Paulus <i>praepositus</i> [<i>augustae?</i>]		50 lb of gold, 60 furniture/ textile items
– Anonymus <i>domesticus</i> [of Paulus]		≈ 1.3 lb, 9 items
– Marcella <i>cubicularia</i>		50 lb, 60 items
– Droseria <i>cubicularia</i>		50 lb, 60 items
– Chryseros <i>praepositus</i> [<i>sacri cubiculi?</i>]		200 lb, 86 items
– Solomonus <i>domesticus</i> [of Chryseros]		50 lb, 34 items
– *Romanus <i>cubicularius</i>		30 lb, 26 items
– *Domninus <i>cubicularius</i>		50 lb, 42 items
– *Scholasticus <i>cubicularius</i>		100 lb, 86 items
– Theodorus <i>domesticus</i> [of Scholasticus]		50 lb, 26 items
 <i>Civil officials</i>		
– Heleniana, wife of the <i>praefectus praetorio</i>		100 lb, 86 items
– Florentius <i>assessor</i> [of the <i>praefectus praetorio</i>]		50 lb, 34 items
– Artabas ‘ <i>magnificentissimus</i> ’		100 lb, 86 items
– *Anonymus <i>magister officiorum</i> [Ioannes 12, 431–33?]		100 lb, 86 items
– Anonymus <i>domesticus</i> [of the <i>magister officiorum</i>]		?? = Ruphinus
– *Ruphinus [Rufinus 8, <i>praefectus praetorio</i> 431–32?]		??
– *Anonymus <i>quaestor sacri palatii</i> [Domitianus 4, 432/33?]		100 lb, 86 items
– Ablabius <i>domesticus</i> [of the <i>quaestor sacri palatii</i>]		?? = Eustathius
– *Eustathius [Eustathius 12, <i>praefectus praetorio</i> 420–22?]		??

* Attested in other sources, according to the *PLRE*; numbers after names are *PLRE* designators.

Constantinopolitan Connections: Liudprand of Cremona and Byzantium

Andrew M. Small

Liudprand of Cremona has long been a Byzantinist bogeyman. His *Relatio de Legatione Constantinopolitana*, an account of his embassy to Constantinople in 968 for the western emperor, Otto I, has long been seen as definitive proof of the Latin West's hostility to Constantinople many years before the Fourth Crusade in 1204.¹ With its acidic descriptions of Nikephoros II Phokas and his court, including pieces of highly skilled Latin rhetoric defending Otto's honour and legitimacy, it has also been mined for information about the workings of the Byzantine court in Constantinople.² This paper will instead focus on Liudprand and his works as products of middle Byzantine client management. For, despite his constructed disdain for Byzantium in 969, Liudprand and his family had had a long and fruitful relationship with the court in Constantinople from the reign of Romanos I Lekapenos (920–944). Liudprand's works therefore offer an opportunity to examine tenth-century Byzantine diplomacy from the perspective of the client.³

There is plenty of evidence of Byzantine client management in the tenth century produced by the Byzantines themselves. Examples of this include the *De Administrando Imperio*, a diplomatic handbook produced by Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos (945–959). There are also letter collections, such as those of Nikolaos Mystikos, a central source for Byzantine diplomatic relations

1 Speros Vryonis, Jnr., *Byzantium and Europe* (London, 1967), pp. 91–92; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. Joan Hussey (New Brunswick, N.J., 1969), p. 291.

2 Nicolas Oikonomides, "Titles and Income At the Byzantine Court," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, D.C., 1994), pp. 199–215; Warren Treadgold, *A History Of the Byzantine State And Society* (Stanford, 1997), p. 910; Anthony R. Littlewood, "Gardens Of the Palaces," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, D.C., 1994), pp. 32, 36–37; Johannes Koder and Thomas Weber, *Liutprand von Cremona in Konstantinopel. Untersuchungen zum griechischen Sprachschatz und zu realienkundlichen Aussagen in seinen Werken* (Vienna, 1980).

3 Liudprand of Cremona, *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana* in *Liudprandi Cremonensis Opera*, ed. Paolo Chiesa (Turnhout, 1998); *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. Paolo Squatriti (Washington, D.C., 2007) (henceforth *Legatio*).

with figures like Symeon of Bulgaria, or Landulf of Benevento, but these sources have their problems.⁴ The *De Administrando* was by its own account compiled with a pedagogical intention, and created from the emperor's unique vantage point in the administration of diplomacy.⁵ Moreover, the Byzantine letter was an edited piece of work meant for public consumption.⁶ Like Byzantine letter collections, Liudprand edited his works for a public audience with his own specific purposes, and only his interactions with Byzantium are recorded in his works. Nonetheless, by including Liudprand's works in discussions of client management it is possible to create a fuller understanding of its mechanics and consequences. They comprise a unique set of texts written by a client that detail his relationship with Constantinople.

This Constantinopolitan connection has perhaps been less appreciated in the past that it should have been. There have been several recent literary studies on Liudprand, particularly on his use of humour and gender politics.⁷ In terms of diplomatic history, Constanze Schummer suggested that Liudprand was not a diplomat and his anger at being successfully manipulated led to the writing of the *Legatio*, a private account merely reflecting his rage, and so unreliable as a source.⁸ This same viewpoint had been rejected a decade earlier by

4 Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik (Budapest, 1949) (henceforth *De Administrando*); James Howard-Johnston, "The *De Administrando Imperio*: A Re-examination of the Text and a Re-evaluation of its Evidence about the Rus," in *Les centres proto-urbains russes entre Scandinavie, Byzance et Orient*, ed. Michel Kazanski, Anne Nercessian and Constantin Zuckerman (Paris, 2000), pp. 305–308; Nicholas Mystikos, *Nicholas Mystikos I Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters*, ed. and trans. Romilly J. H. Jenkins and Leendert G. Westernik (Washington, D.C., 1973) (henceforth *Nicholas, Letters*), 3, 5–11, 14–31, 82–85.

5 Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik (Washington, D.C., 1967) (henceforth *De Administrando*); Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *De Administrando Imperio ii, Commentary*, ed. Romilly J. H. Jenkins (London, 1962), pp. 1–8.

6 Margaret Mullett, "The Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter," in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition: University of Birmingham Thirteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies 1979*, ed. Margaret Mullett and Roger Scott (Birmingham, 1981), p. 77.

7 Ross Balzaretti, "Liudprand of Cremona's Sense of Humor," in *Humour, History and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Guy Halsall (Cambridge and New York, 2002), pp. 114–128; idem, "Men and Sex in Tenth-century Italy," in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. Dawn M. Hadley (London, 1999), pp. 119–127.

8 Constanze M. F. Schummer, "Liutprand of Cremona – a Diplomat?," in *Byzantine Diplomacy – Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot, 1992), pp. 197–201.

Thomas Weber.⁹ Beyond his use as a source of information about the court in Constantinople, Karl Leyser argued that Liudprand was a canny political operator, who created a calculated call to arms using *topoi* he knew would revolt his Ottonian audience.¹⁰ Leyser's approach sought to understand Liudprand by placing him in the Ottonian and Italian context in which he operated. This approach was then used by Henry Mayr-Harting, who argues that the *Legatio* was written more specifically for an audience of southern Lombard lords, and by Conrad Leyser, who used the *Antapodosis* as a source for changes in ecclesiastical politics.¹¹ By examining Liudprand's strong Byzantine connections, this paper reveals Liudprand's Byzantine context. Liudprand operated simultaneously in the Italian, Ottonian and Byzantine worlds, and the evidence of that is in his literary output.

The surviving canon of Liudprand's works can be dated to a fifteen-year period between the mid-950s and the *Legatio* in 968. They also span a wide range of genres, from homilies, to histories, to the *Legatio* itself, which has no contemporary comparisons.¹² Liudprand's first work was also his most popular. The *Antapodosis* was written between the mid-950s and early-960s while in exile north of the Alps.¹³ The *Antapodosis* was unusual among tenth-century Latin histories for the geographical range it covered, and especially for embedding Greek words and phrases in the text.¹⁴ It treats Byzantium on the basis of first-hand knowledge. Moreover, it appears that Liudprand had at least some Greek sources to hand when he was composing it. The *Antapodosis* covered Liudprand's first embassy to Constantinople in 949 and the previous visits of his father and stepfather.¹⁵ This combination of Graecisms and a wider literary

9 Thomas Weber, "Essen und Trinken im Konstantinopel des 10. Jahrhunderts, nach den berichten Liutprands von Cremona," in *Liutprand von Cremona in Konstantinopel. Untersuchungen zum griechischen Sprachschatz und zu realienkundlichen Aussagen in seinen Werken*, ed. Johannes Koder and Thomas Weber (Vienna, 1980), pp. 71–98.

10 Karl Leyser, "Ends and Means in Liudprand of Cremona," in *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe*, ed. Timothy Reuter (London, 1994), pp. 125–142.

11 Henry Mayr-Harting, "Liudprand of Cremona's Account of his Legation to Constantinople and Ottonian Imperial Strategy," *English Historical Review* 116 (2001), p. 552; Conrad Leyser, "Episcopal Office in the Italy of Liudprand of Cremona, c. 890–c. 970," *English Historical Review* 125 (2010), 795–817.

12 Squatriti, "Introduction," *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, pp. 8, 19, 24, 36.

13 Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis* in *Liudprandi Cremonensis Opera* (henceforth *Antapodosis*); Leyser, "Ends and Means," p. 127.

14 Leyser, "Ends and Means," p. 133; *Antapodosis*, I. i, vii, viii, xi, xii; II. iii, xiv, xxiii, xxx, xxxi, xxxiv; III. i, xxv, xxvi, xxxi, xxxv, xxxvi, lxi; IV. iv, vii; V. xv, xx; VI. v, ix, x.

15 *Antapodosis*, III. xxii–xxiv; V. xiv–xv.

range than his contemporaries is also apparent in an Easter homily written for the Otto I's Palatine chapel in the late-950s, which took the form of a dialogue between a Christian and a Jew, a genre that was hitherto unknown north of the Alps.¹⁶ His next work was a Latin-only *apologia* for Otto I called the *Historia Ottonis*, covering the years 961–964 during which Otto consolidated his rule over northern Italy.¹⁷ The last but most famous work is the *Legatio*, which, judging by the manuscript tradition, was nevertheless not popular in the Middle Ages. The *Legatio*'s prominence stems from its use in modern times, not its fame in the medieval era. The sole manuscript copy was lost after the first printed edition was published in 1600.¹⁸ It was the *Antapodosis*, with its favourable coverage of Byzantium, that was of more interest to a medieval audience.¹⁹ It was also the work where Liudprand unashamedly detailed his connections with Constantinople.

These connections were established long before Liudprand's first visit to Constantinople as an ambassador for Berengar of Ivrea in 949.²⁰ Indeed, Liudprand's father had first gone to Constantinople as an ambassador for Hugh of Arles in 927 to Romanos I.²¹ His unnamed father was granted "great honours" by Romanos I before returning to Pavia.²² Moreover, his stepfather went as Hugh's ambassador again to Romanos I, this time in 941 to negotiate the marriage of Hugh's illegitimate daughter Bertha to Romanos II, the son of Konstantinos VII and grandson of Romanos I. While there he was an eyewitness to the Rus' attack on Constantinople.²³ His stepfather may also be the source for the information contained in chapter 26 of the *De Administrando*, which details the recent history of the kingdom of Italy and Hugh's family history, all information that would be vital in negotiations for a marriage alliance.²⁴

16 Liudprand of Cremona, *Homelia Paschalis* in *Liudprandi Cremonensis Opera* (henceforth *Homelia Paschalis*); Karl Leyser, "Liudprand of Cremona – Preacher and Homilist," in *Communications and Power*, pp. 114–115.

17 Liudprand of Cremona, [*De Ottone Rege*] *Historia Ottonis Liudprandi Cremonensis Opera* (henceforth *Historia Ottonis*).

18 Squatriti, "Introduction," p. 30.

19 Michael Angold, "Knowledge of Byzantine History in the West: The Norman Historians (Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries)," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 25 (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 19–23.

20 *Antapodosis*, VI.i–x.

21 *Antapodosis*, III.xxii–xxiv.

22 *Antapodosis*, III.xiv.

23 *Antapodosis*, III.xiv; V.xv.

24 *De Administrando*, xxvi.

The family's growing awareness of how to operate in Constantinople is demonstrated by the gifts that Liudprand brought for his visit in 949. Instead of bringing two hunting dogs like his father, Liudprand purchased four *carzimasia* eunuch slaves from merchants from Verdun.²⁵ The *carzimasium* he considered to be "the most precious of all things", since they would be different to the other eunuchs in Constantinople. Byzantium's own supply of eunuch came from domestic sources and the *carzimasium* were mostly traded to Umayyad Spain.²⁶ When Liudprand came as Otto I's ambassador in 968 his connections with Byzantium were longstanding and based on his family's ties.

This is why the *Antapodosis* is so valuable as a source for Byzantine client management. His works demonstrate that middle Byzantine client management was not aimed solely at rulers, but also at those operating under them over decades. As mentioned before, Liudprand's father received "great honours" from Romanos I, as well as a 'great gift'.²⁷ Liudprand himself in 949 received a silk garment and a pound of gold from Konstantinos VII during the annual *roga* ceremony.²⁸ These gifts and their context strongly imply that Liudprand received a Byzantine court title at this time.

There is other evidence that the Byzantines operated a policy of client relations with political actors below the highest level. The 935 Byzantine expedition to recover *kastra* in the theme of Langobardia is recorded in the *De Cerimoniis*. The *De Cerimoniis* preserves a tally of gold coin and silks given to Hugh of Arles, but also directly to his counts, marquises, and bishops for their military support in the operation.²⁹ Significantly Liudprand's family power did not come from landowning during a period where landholding has come to be seen as synonymous with power.³⁰ Hugh had attempted a series of administrative reforms to centralise power in the kingdom of Italy. In so doing he

25 *Antapodosis*, Bk. III.xii; VI.vi.

26 Paul Magdalino, "Paphlagonians in Byzantine High Society," in *Βυζαντινή Μικρά Ασία (6ος-8ος Αι.) [Byzantine Asia Minor (6th–12th centuries)]*, ed. Stelios Lampakes (Athens, 1998), pp. 148–149; *Antapodosis*, VI.vi.

27 *Antapodosis*, III.xxiv.

28 This is the annual ceremony where holders of imperial offices and dignities are given their stipend, see: *Antapodosis*, VI.x; Oikonomides, "Titles and Income," pp. 200–202.

29 Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris De Cerimoniis*, ed. Immanuel Bekker, 3 vols (Bonn, 1829); *The Book of Ceremonies*, trans. Ann Moffatt and Maxene Tall, 2 vols (Canberra, 2012) (henceforth *De Cerimoniis*), 2:44; John Haldon, "Theory and Practice in Tenth-century Military Administration. Chapters II, 44 and 45 of the Book of Ceremonies," *Travaux et Mémoires* 13 (2000), p. 217.

30 Chris Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society, 400–1000* (London, 1981), p. 144.

relied on a group of 'new' men, mainly Lombards, in his administration.³¹ It is likely that Liudprand's family belonged to this new bureaucratic elite. The Byzantines were apparently creating clients at all levels of northern Italian political society, from the king and the king's servants, as well as to the king's nobles and clergy, on a scale hitherto unappreciated.

There was always an element of compulsion to middle Byzantine client relationships. In southern Italy there had been a revival in Byzantine influence after the conquest of the emirate of Bari in 871.³² This revival also brought northern Italy back into the Byzantine strategic view as a source of allies and manpower, as with the 935 expedition.³³ There was, though, a strong element of attraction as well.³⁴ For Liudprand's family the attraction of a strong connection with the court in Constantinople was that it further strengthened their position in Pavia, which was essential to their position in northern Italian politics. This was useful in the politics of northern Italy, a region going through a period of flux between the end of the Carolingians and Otto I's invasion in 961. Hugh of Arles had been brought in by factions of Italian nobles to replace the murdered Berengar I in 924, but he himself was overthrown by Berengar of Ivrea in 945.³⁵ Berengar of Ivrea then ruled until Otto's invasion in 961.³⁶ The picture is one of political instability and fragmentation, and yet Liudprand's family retained a position of influence with each successive ruler. Their position was sustained by making themselves indispensable technicians who could administer their royal masters' relations with Constantinople. Liudprand's father and stepfather's embassies were for Hugh of Arles. Liudprand's first embassy in 949 was on behalf of Berengar of Ivrea, and for Otto I he would go again in 960, 968, and possibly once more to arrange the marriage of Theophano to Otto II. Members of Liudprand's family went as ambassadors for the rulers of northern Italy a total of six times in the space of forty years. There are no other recorded instances of a family travelling to Constantinople over a comparable period of time during this period.

31 Giuseppe Sergi, "The Kingdom of Italy," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 3*, ed. Timothy Reuter (Cambridge, 1999), p. 358.

32 Graham Loud, "Southern Italy in the Tenth Century," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 3*, p. 624.

33 Vivien Prigent, "La politique sicilienne de Romain Ier Lécapène," in *Guerre et société en Méditerranée (VIII^e–XIII^e siècle)*, ed. Dominique Barthélemy and Jean-Claude Cheynet (Paris, 2008), pp. 63–84.

34 Sergi, "The Kingdom of Italy," p. 353.

35 *De Administrando*, xxvii; Sergi, "The Kingdom of Italy," p. 355.

36 Sergi, "The Kingdom of Italy," p. 357; *Historia Ottonis*, ii.

The vital nature of their relationship with the court in Constantinople is perhaps why Liudprand's stepfather was willing to underwrite the expenses for Liudprand's visit in 949.³⁷ The key attraction for both Berengar and his stepfather was the possibility of Liudprand gaining a Greek education in the city. Berengar said:

Why need I state how much more easily a lad who drank down Latin teachings at such a young age would imbibe Greek ones? My stepfather, readily encouraged by that hope, underwrote all the expenses.³⁸

The key point of Liudprand's Greek education in Constantinople is not whether he became a good Greek scholar. It is that when he returned to Northern Italy he possessed a knowledge of Greek in a social and intellectual landscape where any knowledge of Greek was uncommon.³⁹ As Otto I's power grew in central Europe there came increased contacts with Mediterranean powers, like Byzantium and Umayyad Spain.⁴⁰ On Liudprand's outward journey in 949 he joined a party led by a Byzantine envoy accompanying an Ottonian ambassador to Constantinople.⁴¹ There was also a revival of interest in Greek learning, and, from the 960s, in Byzantine models of diplomacy, including the drafting of imperial diplomas.⁴² Conflict only arose after Otto's coronation as emperor in 962 led to an expansion of his interests in the southern Lombard duchies of southern Italy, where the Byzantines too were expanding their interests, particularly under Nikephoros II Phokas.⁴³ The utility of Liudprand's Greek education in seeking official positions is evident in the works he wrote during his time at the Ottonian court.

Liudprand left Berengar's service in around 950, and went north to the Ottonian court.⁴⁴ The *Antapodosis* and the *Homelia Paschalis* that date from this period were opportunities for Liudprand to exhibit his learning and

37 *Antapodosis*, VI.vi.

38 *Antapodosis*, VI.iii.

39 Rosamond McKitterick, "Ottonian Intellectual Culture in the Tenth Century and the Role of Theophano" in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, ed. Adelbert Davids (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 170–171.

40 Leyser, "Ends and Means," p. 132.

41 *Antapodosis*, VI.iv.

42 Karl Leyser, "*Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta*: Western and Eastern Emperorship in the Later Tenth Century," in *The Empress Theophano*, p. 12.

43 Mayr-Harting, "Liudprand of Cremona," p. 541; Eckhard Müller-Mertens, "The Ottonian Kings and Emperors", in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 3*, pp. 253–254.

44 *Antapodosis*, VI.i-vi.

connections to the court in Constantinople as he sought a position in the Ottonian court. The title of the *Antapodosis*, a Greek word meaning 'retribution', was originally written in Greek miniscule. A surviving tenth century manuscript of the text also has the title of Book 3 written not in Latin but as βιβλος Γ.⁴⁵ The entirety of Book 6 is devoted to his visit in 949. Liudprand's Easter homily survives in only one manuscript in the collection of Bishop Abraham of Freising, a contemporary of Liudprand.⁴⁶ Its title is again written in neat Greek miniscule as Ομιλεία τοῦ λιουτζίου ιταλικού διάκονου (*Homily of Lioutzios the Italian Deacon*).⁴⁷ Bernard Bischoff suggested that it might even be Liudprand's own handwriting on the manuscript.⁴⁸

The target for this erudition was probably not Otto I, as it is likely that Liudprand's target audience was not Otto himself, but rather the circle of educated Latin-speaking clerics who served the king in his chancellery and controlled appointments to the palatine chapel.⁴⁹ In any event, Liudprand was successful in securing an official position. Liudprand became a member of the palatine chapel, took part in an Ottonian embassy to Constantinople in 960 and then was appointed Bishop of Cremona in the Po valley in 961.⁵⁰ It is striking that in Liudprand's next work, the *Historia Ottonis*, was given a Latin title and contains no Graecisms.⁵¹ He may not have needed it by 965, but initially Liudprand's career in the Ottonian court was propelled and sustained by his self-promotion of his connections with Constantinople, and the education he had received there.

Against this background the swing from pro-Byzantine in the *Antapodosis*, to seemingly anti-Byzantine in the *Legatio* must be explained. What would make a client, who had profited from his Constantinopolitan connections, turn against his Byzantine patrons? Liudprand's success in the Ottonian court was inextricably linked with his connections with the court in Constantinople. This may have made him vulnerable after the failure of the 968 embassy, and explain why he wrote the *Legatio*. Liudprand was at the fulcrum of cultural contact between the Latin-speaking West and the Greek-speaking East. Richard

45 *Antapodosis*, I.i; III.i.

46 Leyser, "Preacher and Homilist," p. 113.

47 *Homelia Paschalis*, i.

48 Bernard Bischoff, "Ein Osterpredigt Liutprands von Cremona (um 960)," in *Anecdota novissima* (Stuttgart, 1984), p. 23.

49 Bernard Bischoff, "Die griechische Element in der abendländischen Bildung des Mittelalters," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 44 (1951), 27–55.

50 Leyser, "Ends and Means," p. 126.

51 *Historia Ottonis*, i–xxii.

White, a historian of colonial America and British relations with the Native Americans, has termed the place where this contact took place the ‘middle ground’.⁵² In his definition, the ‘middle ground’ was where people adjusted to difference through a process of creative understandings and expedient misunderstandings, often by appealing to what they perceive to be the values and practices of the other group. This same process of creative misunderstandings can be seen in the *Legatio*’s description of Byzantine clothing during a procession to Hagia Sophia:

Even his nobles [...] wore oversized tunics and much tattered by age. They would have marched much more decorously wearing their everyday clothes: there was no one there whose ancestor owned the tunic when it was new.⁵³

Here Liudprand displayed his understanding of the symbolism and politics of the court and then inverts it to create a scenario he believes will dismay Otto I. The antique nature of the Byzantine officials’ clothing made them more prestigious in Constantinople, while in the Ottonian court it was new clothes that fulfilled this purpose. The process of client relations, combined with his education in Constantinople, enabled Liudprand to understand meanings in two different court cultures, and then use them for his own purposes. This was a broader phenomenon than just Liudprand, but the importance of Liudprand’s texts is that, unlike with Symeon or any other cases, it is possible to discern these in the client’s own words.

Yet, despite the *Legatio*, it is evident from his visit in 949 that Liudprand enjoyed being part of the court in Constantinople. Liudprand was not in the *Legatio* being anti-Byzantine for any profound cultural distaste, but rather for fear over his future career prospects in the Ottonian court. The question remains how far a ‘middle man’, like Liudprand, could be integrated into a Byzantine ‘political nation’. A distinction must be drawn between a ‘political’ Roman identity and an ‘ethnic’ Roman one.⁵⁴ A political identity was bound up with service to the emperor while an ethnic Roman identity was a more fluid

52 Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge, 1991), p. x.

53 *Legatio*, ix.

54 Gill Page, *Being Byzantine: Greek Identity Before the Ottomans* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 44–45; also see a recent article which I was unable to take into full consideration: Ioannis Stouraitis, “Roman Identity in Byzantium: A Critical Approach,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 107 (2014), 175–220.

category with a complex and fluctuating symbols of identity, such as dress, language and religion. The beginnings of a Constantinopolitan based ethnic Roman identity can definitely be found in the tenth century.⁵⁵ When Liudprand sought to find an effective final insult for Nikephoros II Phokas he could think of nothing more appropriate than to call him a “Cappadocian.”⁵⁶ This was where Nikephoros was from but it had another meaning. Cappadocians were stereotyped in Classical literature as boorish provincials, and Liudprand may be picking up on gossip in court about Nikephoros, understanding its meaning and agreeing with it.⁵⁷ It cannot be known what this Byzantine insult meant to his Ottonian audience, but it highlights that Liudprand was entirely at home in the court in Constantinople, and able to understand its political-cultural language. It also suggests that Liudprand identified with a group in court who opposed Nikephoros II and his policies.

The court in Constantinople was not a monolithic and united organisation. Byzantine court politics was riven with factions and ever-shifting alliances between the different players. When Karl Leyser re-examined the *Legatio*, he argued that it reflected not only Liudprand’s Ottonian sympathies, but also a status as a client of the Macedonian dynasty.⁵⁸ Although the years 867–1056 are often periodised as the era of the ‘Macedonian dynasty’, this family did not always provide the senior reigning emperor. In the tenth century there was a succession of military emperors who supplanted the Macedonians as senior emperors while never removing them. These three were Romanos I Lekapenos, Nikephoros II Phokas and Ioannes I Tzimiskes. The implications of Liudprand as a Macedonian client would be another reason for his hostile reception in 968 at the court of Nikephoros II. The evidence for this client status comes from the fact that it was Konstantinos VII who gave Liudprand his court title in 949, and because the *Legatio* consistently points out that Nikephoros was a usurper who kept the rightful emperors – Konstantinos VII’s grandsons Basileios and Konstantinos – from the throne and slighted them at every opportunity.⁵⁹ An alternative reading of both the *Legatio* and the *Antapodosis* reveals a more complicated picture of Liudprand’s court connections than simply pro-Macedonian sympathy. If Liudprand was a Macedonian client then there should be a more consistent pro-Macedonian and anti-Lekapenid leaning in the *Antapodosis*.

55 Page, *Being Byzantine*, p. 47.

56 *Legatio*, x.

57 *Timarion*, trans. Barry Baldwin (Detroit, 1984), p. 90 (footnote 241).

58 Leyser, “Ends and Means,” p. 128.

59 *Antapodosis*, VI.vi; *Legatio*, iii.

Romanos I had risen to imperial power with the justification that he was protecting the rights of the then child emperor Konstantinos VII, but later attempted to make his son Christophoros the heir apparent before his death in 930.⁶⁰ Later Konstantinos showed his antipathy to Romanos in authorial asides in the *De Administrando*.⁶¹ If Liudprand was a partisan of the Macedonians then some of the animosity Liudprand shows towards Nikephoros II should be seen in his coverage of Romanos I. Like Romanos, Nikephoros had come into power by promising to protect the rights of Basileios and Konstantinos and had married their mother Theophano, however Liudprand does not have a negative opinion of Romanos I.⁶² Liudprand does not attempt to conceal the relationship between his father, stepfather and Romanos I. Furthermore, it seems Liudprand had access to a now lost biography which portrayed Romanos in a heroic light slaying lions while spying on Arab camps at night.⁶³ Romanos' downfall in 944 is put down to his desire for Konstantinos VII to succeed him, rather than his sons Stephanos and Konstantinos, and ends with Romanos exiled to a monastery welcoming his sons after their own exile.⁶⁴

This pro-Konstantinos and pro-Romanos line could be a reflection of the position of the possible patron of the work. For, Konstantinos VII's accession to sole rule had not ended the Lekapenid influence on imperial court politics. Basileios the Nothos, an illegitimate son of Romanos, became Konstantinos's *parakoimomenos* in 947, a position he held until 986, except for an interruption under Romanos II.⁶⁵ He would also be a key player in the usurpation of Nikephoros II Phokas and later his successor Ioannes I Tzimiskes in 969.⁶⁶ Basileios was a great patron of the arts and it is likely that he commissioned the pro-Romanos biography that catered to Macedonian sensibilities which Liudprand had apparently read.⁶⁷ Also, as *parakoimomenos* Basileios had the

60 Ioannes Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057*, trans. John Wortley (Cambridge, 2010), pp. x.v, xviii, xxv.

61 *De Administrando*, xiii.

62 *Antapodosis*, II.xlv; III.xxii–xxx, xxxv–xxxviii; V.ix, xiv–xv, xxi, xxiii–xxv.

63 *Antapodosis*, III.xxv.

64 *Antapodosis*, v.xxiii–xxv.

65 Athanasios Markopoulos, “Joseph Bringas: Prosopographical Problems and Ideological Trends,” in *History and Literature of Byzantium in the 9th–10th Centuries* (Aldershot, 2004), IV, pp. 8–10.

66 Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 13.7, 15.1

67 Jeffrey Michael Featherstone, “Basileios Nothos As Compiler: the *De cerimoniis* and *Theophanes Continuatus*” in *The Transmission of Byzantine Texts: Between Textual Criticism and Quellenforschung* eds I. Perez-Martin and J. Signes (Turnhout, 2014), pp. 355–374; Vasiliki Vlysidou, Η πολιτική του Βασιλείου Λακαπηνού εναντίον της Δύσης

patronage, power, and ability to build a network of clients within the court and outside the empire. Holding this position meant that in 949 he would have been either physically present beside Konstantinos or at the very least aware of Liudprand's acceptance of a title during that year's *roga* ceremony. A reflection of Basileios' powers of patronage in the court of Konstantinos can be seen in Ioannes Skylitzes. Skylitzes uses a source critical to Konstantinos which criticised Konstantinos' over-reliance on his wife Helena, the legitimate daughter of Romanos, and Basil, the illegitimate son of Romanos, when making appointments and handing out titles.⁶⁸ Basileios also expressed his close, family links to Konstantinos, Helena and their descendants in a dedication on a silver-gilt metalwork reliquary for the skull of St Stephen the Protomartyr dateable to before 959. The inscription listed Basileios as an 'imperial agent' (βασιλικός), brother-in-law to the emperor (γαμβρός κρατοῦντος) and tutor to the imperial family (βαῖιουλος μέγας) as well as the *parakoimomenos*.⁶⁹ The pro-Macedonian sympathies expressed in the *Legatio* may be explained by the recurring use of junior Macedonian emperors as justification for opposition to a senior emperor, even for their usurpation.⁷⁰ This would be one of the justifications for Ioannes I Tzimiskes' actions during the coup which included the murder of Nikephoros II in 969 inside the palace itself in which Basileios played a decisive role and Basileios' position within court politics was in part predicated on his familial relationship with Basileios II and Konstantinos VIII.⁷¹ Liudprand's step-father's role in negotiating Romanos II's first marriage would also provide a familial and historical link to Basileios and the imperial family.

The *Legatio* contains two disagreements between Liudprand and Basileios the Nothos. One concerning the marriage of Maria/Eirene, a granddaughter of Romanos to Peter I of Bulgaria in 927, and the other over the position of the pope in relation to the emperor.⁷² These disagreements do not automatically disqualify Liudprand from being in a form of patronage relationship with

[*Basil Lakapenos' Policy Against the West*], *Byzantina Symeikta* 18 (2008), 111–29; Steven Wander, *The Joshua Roll* (Wiesbaden, 2012), 93–132.

68 Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 11.3.

69 Wander, *Joshua Roll*, 96.

70 Rosemary Morris, "Succession and Usurpation: Politics and Rhetoric in the Late Tenth Century," in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th century, Papers from the Twenty-Sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Paul Magdalino (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 202–205.

71 Morris, "Succession and Usurpation," p. 205.

72 *Legatio*, xv, xviii; Jonathan Shepard, "A marriage too far? Maria Lekapena and Peter of Bulgaria" in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, ed. A. Davids (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 135–158.

Basileios the Nothos either directly or indirectly. These debates are held in the presence of other officials including Leon Phokas. Liudprand is writing directly to Otto I, his current patron. This would not be an appropriate situation for Liudprand to behave like or report his position as a client of Basileios. Liudprand was also not a cipher for his many patrons but his own man, whose power and position comes from leveraging the connections between them. The complexity of the *Legatio* as a historical text comes from Liudprand's own complex connections with his patrons, both past and present, and how this shaped his written representation of the world around him. A continued relationship with a network of patronage connected with Basileios the Nothos within the court would also answer why, despite his protestations, Liudprand was well informed of Nikephoros' support for a group of Italian exiles and other areas of Nikephoros' foreign policy.⁷³

Nikephoros pursued a more aggressive policy of expansion on Byzantium's borders. In the Balkans, Nikephoros paid Svjatoslav of Kiev in 968 to attack and destroy the First Bulgarian Empire, and in Italy launched a Byzantine invasion of Sicily in 964 to regain a foothold on the island.⁷⁴ A period of armed conflict between Ottonian and Byzantine forces formed the immediate background to Liudprand's embassy in 968. The results of this more forward foreign policy were decidedly mixed and controversial amongst Byzantines themselves. Nikephoros's attempts to have fallen soldiers be treated as martyrs faced considerable opposition; so too were his attempts to use millenarian ideology as justification for his actions, and Svjatoslav's decision to stay in the Danube valley was a cause for Nikephoros' overthrow and murder in 969.⁷⁵ Ioannes I Tzimiskes, in contrast, would follow a less bellicose policy towards the Ottonians, and refocus Byzantine expansion towards Syria and the east. A sign of a Byzantine-Ottonian détente immediately after Nikephoros's death can be seen in Tzimiskes sending his niece Theophano as a bride for Otto II in 972.⁷⁶ Court politics were factional but also based on policy. Liudprand, with his family's history negotiating marriages with the Byzantines, by his very presence represented a different potential policy with the Ottonians and connected disgruntled officials, possibly even Basileios the Nothos, with outside forces. Certainly Byzantine officials were supplying Liudprand with information they knew would be shared with Otto I, giving Liudprand silks as gifts

73 *Legatio*, xiv, xxix.

74 Skylitzes, 14.9.

75 Rosemary Morris, "The Two Faces of Nikephoros Phokas," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 12 (1988), p. 88; Skylitzes, 14.18.

76 Mayr-Harting, "Liudprand of Cremona," p. 554.

and showing him an apocalyptic text that refuted Nikephoros's claims to be the Last Roman Emperor.⁷⁷ Utilising Liudprand as a source demonstrates that rather than keeping foreigners on the outside, Byzantine client relationships drew them into the internal power dynamics of the court. A central message in the *De Administrando* is that the Emperor should directly control client relations.⁷⁸ Liudprand's writings suggest that Konstantinos may well have given good advice in but even he found it difficult to put this into practice.

It is because of the different perspective on Byzantium that Liudprand brings which makes him an invaluable source for Byzantine diplomacy. He provides a client's eye view that we do not get anywhere else. From this perspective it is possible to gain a fuller understanding of how complex policy formation was in the Byzantine court. Byzantine client-relations were not the sole preserve of the emperor. Instead, Liudprand's experience shows historians should speak of multiple groups within the court managing several, possibly, contradictory foreign policies at the same time. This was based on long-term personal connections established between aristocratic families across political boundaries such as the one between Liudprand's family and the Lekapenids. It has often been argued that the involvement of foreigners in Byzantine succession politics in the twelfth-century led to the growing weakness of the Byzantine state and then the calamity of 1204 but such a role was already inherent in the system at least two centuries earlier.⁷⁹ Contact with the court in Constantinople was an essential part of middle Byzantine client-relations not just for royal families but also for any ambitious family. There was the opportunity for advancement whether in Imperial service or, by using the contacts and skills picked up in Constantinople, for rulers who wanted or needed to deal with the Byzantine Empire. Taking his Byzantine connections into account adds nuance to approaching Liudprand's work, especially the *Legatio*. For Liudprand was, in his own idiosyncratic way, a Byzantine.

77 Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 96–122; Liudprand, *Legatio*, xxxix, xxxx.

78 *De Administrando Imperio*, Proem.

79 Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025–1204: A Political History*, 2nd ed. (London, 1997), pp. 315, 317, 325.

Strengthening Justice through Friendship and Friendship through Justice: Michael Psellos and the Provincial Judges

Jonas Nilsson

Michael Psellos once struck a bargain with the people of the village of Atzikome. The villagers offered their services as farmers in exchange for Psellos' influence with the *kritēs* of Opsikion, his "most learned brother". True to his word, Psellos wrote a letter to the judge on behalf of the *Atzikomitai*. He wrote that it was the *kritēs*' duty to swiftly provide judicial help to those in need of it, but that friendship had more influence, thus calling upon him to be both a true friend (φίλος ἀληθής) and a just judge (δικαστῆς ἀκριβῆς), strengthening friendship (φιλία) through justice (δικαιοσύνη), and justice through friendship.¹ Psellos' elegant turn of phrase aside, what is really going on here? At first sight, it might be tempting to dismiss the references to justice as a rhetorical fig-leaf intended to mask the essentially self-serving nature of the request. The villagers obviously feared they would lack judicial protection without Psellos' intervention, or else they would have had no reason to trade their labour for it, while Psellos for his part clearly felt no qualms about using his influence with the judge to turn a profit from the toil of the *Atzikomitai*.

While there is surely some validity to this interpretation, I believe that it misses important nuances, and that the rhetoric about the harmonious co-existence between friendship and justice reflects fundamental aspects of the practice of civil administration, as well as its ideological underpinnings. Based on a number of letters from Psellos to provincial *kritai*, I intend to argue that friendship was important because the Byzantine state essentially relied on private networks to exercise public power in the provinces. This lack of distinction between private and public power meant that the magistrates of the empire could, did, and indeed were expected to use the influence gained through their offices to benefit themselves and their friends. This was, however, only expected insofar as it did not prevent them from fulfilling their duties as officials, such as maintaining imperial justice. I will also suggest that

1 Michael Psellos, *Scripta minora magnam partem adhuc inedita II: Epistulae* 99, ed. Eduard Kurtz and Franz Drexel (Milan 1941), pp. 127–128 (henceforth Psellos, *KD*).

reputation served, or was intended to serve, as a safeguard against officials neglecting their duties in pursuit of personal gain.

The known and preserved letters of Michael Psellos number between 500 and 550, depending on questions of attribution.² They are addressed to more than 150 different recipients, many of which were provincial *kritai* to whom Psellos often wrote in order to ask for various fiscal or judicial favours, motivated by their mutual friendship. As Margaret Mullett has evinced, friendship was widely regarded as an instrumental relationship in Byzantium, something that should work to the benefit of the friends in more than a spiritual sense.³ She points out that the Byzantines did use emotions and emotional expressions of their friendships, indeed that emotional hold and shared ideals could provide stability and enduring reciprocity and thus serve to make the friendship work better. She nevertheless maintains that it is the instrumentality that stands out when attitudes are compared, for instance, to those prevalent in the medieval west. As such, it is hardly remarkable that Psellos was attempting to profit from his friendships with provincial judges by writing to them asking for favours. For instance, he wrote to the *kritēs* of Opsikion, stating that if he cared for Psellos he should also care for his properties, sparing them from tax among other things.⁴ The *kritēs* of Boleron is asked to survey a poor monastery that Psellos had been given and help solve its problems if he found them to be solvable, because of their mutual friendship (διὰ τὴν τῆς φιλίας κοινότητα).⁵ He praises another *kritēs* as a true friend (ἀληθὴς φίλος) because he speedily fulfils the requests of his friends (αἱ τῶν φίλων ἀξιώσεις). He notes that such requests should be fulfilled with both virtue (ἀρετή) and friendship (φιλία) and finally asks the judge to repeat a previous favour.⁶

This sentiment is even more clearly expressed in a letter written to one *kritēs* on behalf of a dear relative, whom Psellos expects the judge to make his friend (ἵνα [...] ὥς οἰκεῖον ἔχῃς) and offer sympathy as well as help with

2 Stratis Papaioannou, "Das Briefcorpus des Michael Psellos: Vorarbeiten zu einer kritischen Neuedition. Mit einem Anhang: Edition eines unbekannten Briefes," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 48 (1998), p. 68; Michael Jeffreys, *Summaries of the Letters of Michael Psellos* (unpublished). I am grateful to Professor Jeffreys for allowing me to use his forthcoming summaries of Psellos' letters. They have been invaluable in my research.

3 Margaret Mullett, "Byzantium: A Friendly Society?," *Past & Present* 118 (1988), pp. 13, 16–19.

4 Psellos, *KD* 116, pp. 143–144.

5 Psellos, *KD* 89, p. 118.

6 Michael Psellos, *Μεσαιωνική βιβλιοθήκη η συλλογή ανεκδότων μνημείων της Ελληνικής ιστορίας. Μιχαήλ Ψελλού ιστορικοί λόγοι, επιστολαί και άλλα ανέκδοτα* 21 (*Medieval Library Collection of Various Monuments of Greek History. Michael Psellos' Historical Works, Letters and other Pieces*), ed. Konstantinos N. Sathas, 4 vols (Venice 1876), 5:258–9 (henceforth Psellos, S).

regard to taxes.⁷ He points out that true friends (ἀληθεῖς φίλοι) should think themselves both relatives and friends (καὶ φίλοι καὶ συγγενεῖς) and be of the same mind concerning help for friends and obligations towards relatives, and that the *kritēs*, if he was at all concerned for what was fitting among friends, should consider and treat Psellos' relatives as his own. Another particularly illuminating letter in this respect is addressed to the *kritēs* Nikolaos Skleros, who had been in need of a new *notarios*. Psellos had sent him an applicant, but an interview with the man had left Skleros unimpressed by his abilities, and he had consequently decided to hire another man. Psellos writes at length about his bitter disappointment with the *kritēs*' decision, insisting that the issue of his candidate's qualifications was entirely insignificant. Even if he was burdensome (φορτικός), a half-baked writer (ἡμίτομος γραφεύς) and a shadow of a secretary (σκία τις ὑπογραμματεύοντος) Skleros should have hired him anyway, simply because he was recommended by Psellos, who had always been willing to assume any burden for his sake, and had consequently sent his candidate to the *kritēs* once more, exhorting him to change his decision for the sake of their friendship.⁸

Friendship was not, however, evoked only as a means for powerful individuals to exchange favours to their mutual benefit. Psellos also employed his network to ensure that imperial orders were carried out. In a letter to the *kritēs* of Thrakesion, he writes that a wealthy man had been impoverished after a lawsuit against powerful opponents, but that the emperor had found this to be unjust and had ordered the case to be re-examined. Psellos urges the judge to do this and provide legal assistance to the wronged party, assuming that he would be motivated by his concern for imperial judgement (βασιλική κρίσις), his friendship (φιλία) towards Psellos, and, above all, the protection of justice (ἡ τοῦ δικαίου φυλακή).⁹ Similarly, he conveys a request from a *magistros*, asking the *kritēs* of Boukellarion to carry out imperial orders to survey disputed land and measure out the proper boundaries, which he describes as a service to both justice (δικαιοσύνη) and pure friendship (φιλία πρὸς ἡμᾶς καθαρὰ).¹⁰ Psellos emphasises his desire to help the *magistros*, stating that while he could do nothing of his own, there was much he could do through his friends like the *kritēs*. In both of these cases Psellos clearly presents the execution of imperial orders as personal favours to himself, which suggests that the emperor to some

7 Psellos, *KD* 165, p. 191.

8 Psellos, *KD* 128, pp. 151–2.

9 Psellos, *S* 76, p. 310; Psellos, *KD* 66, pp. 99–100.

10 Psellos, *KD* 84, p. 113.

extent relied on Psellos' friendships with the *kritai* to see his decisions carried out in the provinces.

Even when the emperor had issued no specific order to carry out, Psellos still appears to have worked through his network of friends to facilitate the administration of justice for his subjects. We find him intervening in a case concerning the disputed estate of a recently deceased man, where greedy neighbours have exploited the son and heir's absence in combination with legal excuses to take over all their property. He writes to the *kritēs* who is handling the matter and asks him to await the return of the son before making any ruling, however reasonable the neighbours' justifications may seem. Moreover, he apologises for telling the *kritēs* to do what he surely would have done anyway, but explains that his involvement is prompted by the concerns of the aggrieved family, who are worried that the matter will not be well handled.¹¹ Psellos does not hint of any personal involvement in the matter, nor does he portray it as unusual in any way, thus giving the impression that people commonly petitioned him with their judicial concerns. The fact that Psellos evidently performed such functions by virtue of imperial commission at some point in his career lends additional plausibility to this interpretation.

Another request, addressed to a *kritēs* named Maleses, is written on behalf of a poor soldier (πτωχὸς στρατιώτης), who wanted to go on campaign, but had been hindered by a complex legal problem.¹² Psellos refers to Maleses' friendly character (τῆς φιλίας ὁ χαρακτήρ) and expects him to fulfil the request to remove the legal obstacles out of consideration for their friendship (ἢ ἐμὴ φιλία). Again, it seems probable that the soldier had petitioned Psellos, who had found his case to have merit and thus decided to help him. Furthermore, he writes in a letter to the *kritēs* of Optimaton that he has been informed by a friend of the plight of another man who had been wronged in a land dispute against the people of another village.¹³ Out of concern for the victim, Psellos asks the *kritēs* to investigate and establish justice, for the sake of friendship (φίλου λόγος), justice (δικαιοσύνη) and the divine recompense for a righteous judgement (μισθὸς δικαιοκρισίας παρὰ τῷ θεῷ).

Similarly, in two unaddressed letter he requests that judges watch over poor (πτωχοί) men who had suffered misfortunes in life and help them if they should face new problems. In one of them he also mentioned that he had petitioned others before on the man's behalf.¹⁴ There is also a letter addressed

¹¹ Psellos, *KD* 182, pp. 201–202.

¹² Psellos, *KD* 132, pp. 154–155.

¹³ Psellos, *KD* 52, pp. 83–84.

¹⁴ Psellos, *S* 195, 201, pp. 489, 494–495.

to the *kritēs* of Boukellarion, who apparently had criticised Psellos for trying to help an accused man, where he responds that he simply acted out of pity for the unfortunate man and that if the judge would do the same and consider his plea he would stand to gain Psellos as a friend (φίλος), which no one regrets obtaining.¹⁵ Moreover, there are two letters where he asks the *kritai* of Opsikion and Anatolikon to allow a *vestarchēs* and a metropolitan respectively to pay their taxes in the capital rather than to provincial authorities.¹⁶ Psellos claims that this would be revenue neutral, but the requests still appear to be couched as personal favours. In one of them he explicitly refers to aid for the metropolitan (ἐκείνῳ ὠφέλεια) as a favour to himself (ἐμοὶ χάρις), whereas in the second one he speaks more coyly about requests (ἄξιώσεις) made by those who have the power (δύναμις) to do so and that those requests should be granted (πληρούτσων) by those able to do that, so that they offer help (ἵνα [...] θεραπεύσωσι καὶ [...] ὠφελῶσιν). If Psellos should be taken at his word here, he consequently seems to be mobilising the power of his friendships to simplify the bureaucratic procedure without compromising the interests of the state.

There are also cases, like the one concerning the villagers of Atzikome, where Psellos clearly has a personal stake in the judicial proceedings he tries to influence. One such is a letter to an unspecified *kritēs* concerning an associate who had been severely injured by one of his neighbours, in which he states that both the judge's zeal for justice (ὕπὲρ τοῦ δικαίου ζήλος) and his disposition towards Psellos (ἡ πρὸς ἡμᾶς σου διάθεσις) demands a full judicial investigation.¹⁷ The aspect of mutual benefit is especially pronounced in a letter to the *kritēs* of Katotika,¹⁸ on behalf of a certain Peloponnesian, in which Psellos asks for his straight and direct judgement (ὀρθὴ καὶ ἀπαρέγκλιτος κρίσις), but also requests that he indicts with some benevolence (φιλανθρωπότερον ἀπογράφεσθαι), promising that the man would remember him for the favours, and Psellos himself even more so.¹⁹ Another letter is addressed to a *kritēs* who was about to judge a case involving one of Psellos' associates, on behalf of whom he was writing. Psellos strikes a flattering note, praising the good luck of his friend who will come before a judge who takes no bribes and no account of personalities in his judgements, and claiming that he does not write to ask for justice (εὐθυδικία), since the impartial *kritēs* would give that unbidden, but merely to mobilise the dimension of friendship (φιλία) as well. This, Psellos states, would not affect

¹⁵ Psellos, *KD* 92, p. 120.

¹⁶ Psellos, *KD* 81–2, p. 111.

¹⁷ Psellos, *KD* 171, pp. 194–195.

¹⁸ I.e. the Peloponnese.

¹⁹ Psellos, *KD* 76, pp. 107–108.

the scales of justice, but a friendly welcome would ensure that the case would be put effectively.²⁰

This curious interplay between friendship and justice appears in a number of other letters as well. In one of them, Psellos writes to console Konstantinos, the nephew of the patriarch Keroularios, who was on trial for a serious offence, the details of which are obscure.²¹ He ensures his friend that the court seemed just and merciful and that if he only bared his soul all would see his innocence. Yet he also admitted to having done nothing worthy of their friendship (φιλία) to bring about a good conclusion, and promised that he would now do so “with tongue, hand, foot, lamentations and tears” (γλώσση καὶ χειρὶ καὶ ποδὶ καὶ θρήνοις καὶ δάκρυσι) and even lists a number of other influential people who would do the same, thus indicating that an impartial court did not preclude the influence of friends. We also find Psellos forcefully employing friendship to simply ask for a fair judgement in another letter to a *kritēs*. This time it is on behalf of Ioannes Mauropous concerning a land dispute where, apparently, he had appearances against him.²² Psellos notes that the *kritēs* had asked him to send any requests his way and that they would be fulfilled unquestioned. If he, for Psellos’ and Mauropous’ sake (δι’ ἡμᾶς καὶ δι’ ἐκεῖνον), measured fairly, neither exaggerating nor underestimating, he would give himself all good things through one action: praise (διὰ γλώττης εὐφημίαι) from them both, and divine recompense (παρὰ θεῶ ἀντίδοσις) for his reverence for both friendship (φιλία) and wisdom (λόγος). In a similar letter, Psellos urges the *kritēs* of Boukellarion to be just and not only serve the interests of the *sekreton* when fulfilling imperial orders to mark out the boundaries of the land of the *magistros* Gregorios, which he describes as a service to both justice (δικαιοσύνη) and pure friendship (φιλία πρὸς ἡμᾶς καθαρὰ).²³

Impartial justice is also requested in a letter to the *kritēs* of Macedonia, who is praised for his dignity (σεμνότης), which, according to Psellos, was widely famous and settled immovably on the good, and asked only to fulfil the present request to the appropriate measure (τῇ συμμέτρῳ ἐκτάσει) when making his judgement.²⁴ Psellos is however careful to point out that the man on whose behalf he writes praised (ἐπῆναι) and extolled (ἀνεκηρύττε) the *kritēs*, having first listened to Psellos’ praise and then seen for himself, while his accusers had changed the praise for the *kritēs*’ propriety into a different tune (τὸ τῆς

20 Psellos, *KD* 166, pp. 191–192.

21 Psellos, *KD* 31, pp. 46–49.

22 Psellos, *KD* 221, pp. 262–263.

23 Psellos, *KD* 84, p. 113.

24 Psellos, *KD* 73, pp. 105–106.

σῆς κοσμιότητος ἐγκώμιον εἰς ἑτέραν φωνὴν μετεποίησαν), that is, slandered him. We will return to the issues of slander and praise, but for now it suffices to conclude that Psellos seems eager to ensure that the impartial *kritēs* knew which of the parties in the lawsuit was his friend, and which was not. Moreover, when asking the *kritēs* of Opsikion to intervene with justice against creditors who were unwilling to pay, he expects the judge to heed his request both for the sake of justice itself (δι' αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ δίκαιον) and then (ἔπειτα) because Psellos requested it (δι' ἐμὲ τὸν ἀξιοῦντὰ σε ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ).²⁵ The use of ἔπειτα might be taken to suggest that justice was of more importance than friendship, but even so we find the opposite sentiment in another letter, also addressed to the *kritēs* of Opsikion. Here, he pleads for mercy for a man who had been punished even though he was innocent, since the condemnation of the innocent infringed both on laws (ἀδικεῖς μὲν νόμους) and on friendship (ἀδικεῖς δὲ φιλίαν), which he expected the judge to hold even above laws (ἦν καὶ νόμων ὑπερτέραν τίθης).²⁶

It should be noted that in all the letters above concerning the administration of justice, Psellos is remarkably consistent in his rhetoric despite the varying circumstances of the cases. All kinds of requests can be motivated by friendship, even if they simply amount to the execution of an imperial order, and they can always be couched as a personal favour, even if Psellos appears to have nothing to gain from them. On the other hand, he never explicitly asks for anything but an impartial judgement, even when the outcome clearly would affect himself or any of his friends. In these letters, the influence of friends is thus consistently portrayed as a natural and valuable addition to the impartial judicial proceedings, ensuring fairness rather than subverting the process. Psellos consequently appears to imply that the judicial administration lacked the institutional rigour to independently guarantee just outcomes, and that it therefore needed to be reinforced by the positive influence of righteous and trustworthy men such as himself. Although his true motivations are beyond the reach of the historian, the rhetoric is arguably significant in itself. We must keep in mind that Byzantine letters were not private in the sense that they were written to be read only by the addressee, but rather 'intimate and confidential and intended for publication.'²⁷ We can consequently expect them to reflect contemporary norms of political behaviour.

As we have seen, Psellos consistently treats the issue of his personal interest as entirely uncontroversial; if anything, he appears to consider it to lend extra

25 Psellos, *KD* 120, pp. 145–146.

26 Psellos, *KD* 142, p. 169.

27 Margaret Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Aldershot 1997), p. 16.

weight to his requests. On the other hand, in all the letters where we have found him intervening in a judicial process, he seems very careful to present his case as being in line with the righteous administration of justice. As for references to friendship, they feature prominently in virtually every letter. This suggests that the magistrates of the Byzantine state were charged with bringing imperial justice to the emperor's subjects, that this was an obligation taken seriously, and that they were expected to fulfil it by employing not only the authority vested in them through their offices, but also their network of friends throughout the provinces. Furthermore, they were also free to use both for personal profit, as long as it did not interfere with their duties as officials. It is put especially bluntly in a letter to Pothos, the *kritēs* of Opsikion, whom Psellos congratulates on aptly combining what he considered to be the twin duties of a thematic judge, namely upholding justice and making money.²⁸ Psellos' letters thus seem to reflect a society where the emperor, and those close to him in Constantinople, took care to involve themselves in the workings of the provincial judicial system and strove to promote their own interests as well as values such as justice and philanthropy. They did, however, understand it in less absolute institutional terms than a modern observer might and exercised their authority in a personal rather than impersonal manner, with considerable room for individual discretion.

Given the limitations of a pre-modern justice system, such an institutional order may well be considered rational, but the personal nature of the power exercised even at lower administrative levels naturally left ample opportunity for abuse of authority and exploitation of asymmetric power relations for personal gain. What incentives, then, were there for Byzantine officials to actually live up to the lofty ideals expressed in these letters? I believe that Psellos hints at an answer to this question in the letter to the *kritēs* of Macedonia considered above, where he makes sure to point out that the man on whose behalf he writes praised the *kritēs*, while the other party in the lawsuit had slandered him.²⁹ Such a concern with reputation is, in fact, a recurring feature throughout Psellos' correspondence with the provincial *kritai*. There are two letters to the *kritēs* of Kibyrraioton on behalf of the *notarios* Ioannes. In the first, Psellos writes that Ioannes should be treated well and be allowed to make some money precisely because he had praised the judge far and wide, having become a herald of his virtue (κηρυξ τῶν σῶν ἀρετῶν) and speaking well (εὐφημῶν) of his deeds.³⁰ The second one states that Ioannes had proclaimed

28 Psellos, *KD* 35, pp. 56–58.

29 Psellos, *KD* 73, pp. 105–106.

30 Psellos, *S* 66, pp. 297–298.

(κηρύττει) the *kritēs* with eloquence and liberality, and expresses a wish that as the *kritēs* benefits from his tongue, so would Ioannes benefit from the *kritēs*' disposition.³¹ A similar sentiment is expressed in a letter to the *kritēs* of Thrakesion, where Psellos writes that the help the judge had given a *notarios* was probably less than the thanks given in return, so either the beneficence (ἀγαθοεργία) had to be increased to match the *enkōmia*, or the praise (εὐφημία) had to be decreased.³² He makes the same argument to another *kritēs*, whom he calls upon to increase his generosity (εὐμένεια) to match the courtesy (εὐγνωμοσύνη) of the man on whose behalf he is writing.³³

In a letter of recommendation on behalf of the bishop of Parnassos, whom he refers to as his friend (φίλος), Psellos notes that the bishop is neither an orator or a thinker, but strong in gratitude and loud in praise, which he evidently regards important enough to make up for his lack of other qualities.³⁴ In a letter conveying the thanks of an associate, he also asks rhetorically what would happen if more help was forthcoming when one small favour (βραχεία ἢ σὴ προνοία) made the recipient so grateful (οὕτως εὐγνωμονεῖ).³⁵ Psellos also writes to the *kritēs* of Katotika, reassuring him of his friendship by insisting he is the first to promote him with praiseful tongue (δι' εὐφήμου γλώττης ἄγω τὰ σά), and claiming that everyone is in agreement with him, hanging on his words, thus emphasising the value of his praise. He proceeds to note that the *kritēs* enjoys a good reputation (κρείττων φήμη), which he lets ring nobly around himself, and that he would deserve congratulations if he managed to fill his purse besides, but also warns him that his deeds would cast shadows in the form of words (ὥς λόγος ἔργου σκιή).³⁶ He similarly advises the *kritēs* of Drougoubiteia to give priority to maintaining a good name (ἀγαθὸν ὄνομα) rather than making a lot of money (πλοῦτον πολύν).³⁷ Moreover, in the letter to Pothos, the *kritēs* of Opsikion, considered above, Psellos stresses the strong bonds of friendship between them by stating that he held out his judgement and sentences, boasted about him in letters to the emperor and attached an encomium to him with every word.³⁸ These letters suggest that having grateful

31 Psellos, *S* 67, p. 299.

32 Psellos, *KD* 131, pp. 153–154.

33 Psellos, *KD* 174, pp. 196–197.

34 Psellos, *S* 63, pp. 295–296.

35 Psellos, *KD* 167, p. 192.

36 Psellos, *KD* 55, pp. 87–88.

37 Psellos, *KD* 90, pp. 118–119.

38 Psellos, *KD* 35, p. 58.

people speak well of one, preferably in public and in particular to the emperor, was regarded as being of considerable value by the magistrates of the empire.

That slander, praise's natural counterpart, was something to be feared greatly is evident from another letter. Here Psellos encourages the *kritēs* of Macedonia to take heart, promising emphatically to protect him from every slanderous tongue (γλῶσσα βάσκανος), and advising him to steer a middle course between yielding to everything (πάσιν ὑπείκων) and opposing everything (πρὸς ἅπαντας ἀνθιστάμενος).³⁹ The severity of being subjected to slander is also underlined in a letter to another *kritēs*, who, judging from internal evidence, was probably Psellos' son-in-law.⁴⁰ He writes that the *kritēs*' wife had been ill and in pain, but hurt even more by a false rumour about her husband (ἐπὶ τῇ πλασθείσῃ περὶ σοῦ φήμῃ). If Psellos had not been there, both encouraging and presenting another version of the story (τὰ μὲν, παραμυθούμενος, τὰ δὲ πλαττόμενος), her soul would have gone to Hades. He also reassured the *kritēs* that he was filling the imperial ears with tales (τοιαῦτα διηγήματα) about him, by which he presumably meant that he showered him with praise, thus counteracting the malicious rumours. The dangers are even more clearly expressed in another unaddressed letter, where Psellos writes to excuse his failure to convince the emperor to grant his correspondent's request, even though he had initially been quite favourably inclined.⁴¹ He emphasises the friendship (φιλία) between himself and his correspondent, and assures him that he is not to be blamed for having failed, explaining that clever men had made charges against him, which were untrue but fabricated in a plausible manner (πιθανῶς πεπλασμένα), and thus had managed to change the emperor's good will and turned him against him.

Given the state's apparent concern for the administration of provincial justice, and the potential for abuse inherent in the personal capacity in which provincial officials seem to have exercised their power, I suggest that reputation served, or was at least intended to serve, as a safeguard against officials neglecting their duties. As we have deduced from the letters referred to above, it would appear that provincial magistrates were allowed, indeed expected, to use their judicial and fiscal discretion to the benefit of themselves, their relatives and their friends. This was nevertheless only acceptable to the extent that they were still able to uphold the ideal of imperial justice to the expected standard. All officials were of course ultimately dependent on the favour of the emperor, who could dismiss them at any time if they failed to properly

39 Psellos, *KD* 7, pp. 8–9.

40 Psellos, *S* 146, pp. 394–395.

41 Psellos, *KD* 79, pp. 109–110.

represent imperial power. Yet it would be impossible for the emperor to keep a detailed record of all the activities of the provincial magistrates throughout the empire.⁴² He, or she, as it sometimes was in Psellos' era, would therefore have to rely on the reports of other magistrates and, as such, the function of oversight would effectively be exercised by the officials themselves, albeit in this very informal manner. From an administrative point of view, networks of friends thus appear to have compensated for the institutional shortcomings of the Byzantine state in two ways. Firstly, by serving to deliver and uphold imperial policies throughout the provinces of the empire and, secondly, by maintaining and enforcing the norms for acceptable social conduct for imperial magistrates.

We may consequently conclude that reputation appears to have been an indispensable resource for anyone who wished to pursue a political career or exercise public power in eleventh-century Byzantium. To maintain a good reputation, however, it was not sufficient for a Byzantine official to uphold, or at least be perceived to uphold, the ideal of imperial justice to the expected standard. As we have seen, he also needed to service his friendships with the other officials on whose praise his reputation was dependent, through the exchange of letters and the granting of favours. In other words, 'strengthening friendship with justice and justice with friendship' where he could, steering 'a middle course between yielding to everything and opposing everything' where he could not, and above all valuing friends who were in a position to protect him from 'every slanderous tongue'. From this perspective, it is hardly surprising that friendship was considered so distinctly instrumental a relationship in Byzantium, in comparison with the more idealistic approach prevalent in the medieval west. For a Byzantine official, friendship was not a luxury that he could indulge in at his leisure, but rather a basic necessity for his career opportunities and the basis of his social and economic status.

42 Günter Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich 1973), pp. 38–40.

PART 3

The Civic & The Holy



Eusebius' Caesarea: The Writing of History and the Dynamics of Ecclesiastical Politics in Fourth-Century Palestine

Robson Della Torre

This paper aims to understand the place attributed by Eusebius in his literary production to his own Caesarea Maritima, the city in Palestine of which he was bishop for more than two decades.¹ As will be argued below, Eusebius wrote little about his city in his works, but, when he did, he focused on very precise information in such a way as to promote his see to a prominent place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of his age, rivalling it even with important sees such as Jerusalem and Alexandria. It will be suggested that this was done according to a specific way of writing history that was peculiar to Eusebius, and that it was connected with the dynamics of ecclesiastical politics of the time, including, perhaps, the outbreak of the Arian controversy.

In recent decades, much work has been done to understand how Eusebius operated when compiling information and arranging it in his historical and/or apologetic narratives. He is no longer considered the dishonest writer whom Jacob Burckhardt thought he was,² nor is he regarded as a pure repository of useful information about the beginnings of Christianity and the Roman Empire itself. Instead, scholars now try to comprehend him as a product of a specific intellectual milieu of the very end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth century, in which both biblical scholarship and ideological needs converged into a scenario of bitter polemical debate among Christians, Jews, and pagans in the East. Likewise, increased attention is being paid to Eusebius' involvement in the Church affairs of his age, not only as an opponent of classical 'heretics' such as Montanists and Gnostics, but as an important actor in the theological discussions of his own time – being both a strong supporter of Origen against contemporary criticism coming from his fellow Christians, as

1 Eusebius is usually reckoned as the local bishop from soon after the end of the Great Persecution in 313 until his death, probably in 339. For the latter date, see Timothy Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), p. 263.

2 Jacob Burckhardt, *The Age of Constantine the Great*, trans. Moses Hases based on the 2nd edition of 1880 (New York, 1949), especially p. 283.

well as a pivotal player in the first years of the Arian controversy. Both these aspects are now regarded as crucial to understanding how Eusebius shaped his ideas about the Christian Church, its hierarchy, and the place that Christianity should take in the Roman Empire of the time.³

Despite continuous efforts in this respect, there is still much to be done in this field, as even basic notions used by Eusebius lack proper treatment. For example, to the best of my knowledge, there is no single study devoted to analysing Eusebius' conception of the Church and how it operated in crucial texts such as the *Ecclesiastical History*.⁴ In the same way, there are now good papers on Eusebius' representations of cities such as Jerusalem in his literary production,⁵ but none devoted to Alexandria or even Rome, which occupy a large space in the bishop's writings. Dealing with Caesarea in this paper is an attempt to fill one of these lacunas, and, I hope, to show the benefits inherent to this kind of approach.

To begin with, it must be noted that Caesarea is absent from most of the works of Eusebius.⁶ There is not a single reference to it in his biblical commentaries on Isaiah or on the Psalms, as well as in his polemical treatises during the Arian controversy (*Against Marcellus* and the *Ecclesiastical Theology*). Caesarea is also not mentioned in his more pedagogical texts, such as *Questions and Answers* to Stephanus and Marinus and in his *General Elementary Introduction*, and even his apologetic writings (the *Preparation of the Gospel* and the *Proof of the Gospel*) fail to record anything explicit about his native city. All of this can be at least partly explained by the fact that Caesarea never appears in the Scriptures apart from incidental references in *Acts of the Apostles*,

3 Among many recent publications on Eusebius with this perspective, see especially *Reconsidering Eusebius: Collected Papers on Literary, Historical, and Theological Issues*, ed. Sabrina Inowlocki and Claudio Zamagni (Leiden, 2011); Aaron Johnson and Jeremy M. Schott, *Eusebius of Caesarea: Tradition and Innovation* (Washington, D.C., 2013). For a fuller recent bibliography on this kind of approach to Eusebius, see Inowlocki and Zamagni, "Preface," in *Reconsidering Eusebius*, pp. viii-ix. To this must now be added Aaron Johnson, *Eusebius of Caesarea* (London, 2014).

4 Although note the good insights on this point offered by Jeremy M. Schott, "Eusebius' *Panegyric on the Building of Churches* (HE 10.4.2-72): Aesthetics and the Politics of Christian Architecture," in *Reconsidering Eusebius*, pp. 177-197. See also Michael J. Hollerich, *Eusebius of Caesarea's Commentary on Isaiah: Christian Exegesis in the Age of Constantine* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 165-203.

5 Peter Walker, *Jerusalem Past and Present in the Purposes of God* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 79-97, the chapter entitled "Jerusalem in the Early Christian Centuries".

6 In what follows, I rely on terminological searches made in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae Project* database.

which made it an unlikely focus of attention in theological issues. Yet there are more serious oddities. In his texts dealing with the emperor Constantine – the *Praise of Constantine* and the *Life of Constantine*, both written by the end of his life – Eusebius listed myriad benefactions made by the emperor to Christian communities throughout the empire, but he did not say a word about those to Caesarea. In fact, he does not mention his city at all, although his remarks about the newly founded Constantinople, which he visited only twice,⁷ are legion. He said a great deal about Constantine's reverence for his own orthodoxy, scholarship and commitment to the peace and unity of the Christian Church,⁸ but none of this related to his own see. Even more startling, Eusebius never even states in any of his works that he was bishop of Caesarea Maritima, since he always fashioned himself as "Eusebius the [son] of Pamphilus".

Considering the kind of interest Eusebius displays in his works, there are other notable absences in his treatment of Caesarea. For example, he was well known as an author with a vivid interest in Christian topography, having written a short compendium *On the place-names of Sacred Scripture* (also known as the *Onomasticon*), in which he listed all the places mentioned in the Old Testament and in the Gospels and provided them with further geographical, historical and contemporary information.⁹ However, Caesarea did not deserve its own entry in this work and was hardly mentioned even as a point of reference to help locate small localities that were by then mere villages.¹⁰ Furthermore,

7 For Eusebius' visits to Constantinople and the references to them in the *Life of Constantine*, see Harold Drake, "What Eusebius Knew: The Genesis of the *Vita Constantini*", *Classical Philology* 83/1 (January, 1988), pp. 25–31.

8 In particular, see Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, ed. Friedhelm Winkelmann, *Über das Leben des Kaisers Konstantins*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1991), 3.60–62 (hereafter cited as VC), where the author offered Constantinian letters relating to the conflicts in the church of Antioch in 327/8. In these, Eusebius was depicted as someone respectful to the canons and to the peace of the Church. Also, see Eusebius, VC, 4.35–36, where he quoted two other letters of Constantine praising him for the composition of a treatise *On Easter* and demanding from him the production of fifty copies of the Scriptures to be used in the new founded churches of Constantinople.

9 On the *On the place-names of Sacred Scripture*, see Timothy Barnes, "The Composition of Eusebius' Onomasticon," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 26/2 (1975), pp. 412–415. In what follows, I use the edition of Erich Klostermann, *Das Onomastikon der biblischen Ortsnamen* (Leipzig, 1904).

10 Eusebius mentions Caesarea four times in the *Onomastikon*. He says that Dor Nafeth was nine milestones away from it, that Iapheth was on the way to Ptolemais from Caesarea, that Naphethdor was also nine milestones away from it, and that there was a place called Saronas between Caesarea and Joppa: Eusebius, *Das Onomastikon*, pp. 78, 108, 136, and 162 respectively.

not even in his *Ecclesiastical History* did Eusebius pay attention to Caesarea's topography. It was only in his *Martyrs of Palestine*, a short text written in 311,¹¹ that the bishop incidentally recorded that Caesarea was a coastal city,¹² where the governor,¹³ indeed sometimes even the emperor resided,¹⁴ and that it was provided with gates,¹⁵ a circus,¹⁶ and a theatre.¹⁷ Furthermore, Eusebius was someone very concerned with church buildings. He composed at least two panegyrics to celebrate the dedication of churches (the *Panegyric on the Church of Tyre* and the *Panegyric on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre* in Jerusalem),¹⁸ and noted the construction of several others in his *Life of Constantine*, sometimes even as far away as Nicomedia.¹⁹ Surprisingly, Eusebius never mentioned the existence of a single church building in Caesarea, not even the one where he celebrated the liturgy for a quarter of century.

In my view, all these absences point out that, when Eusebius dealt with Caesarea in his works, he had a very specific focus in mind. Whatever he said about his city, he said it because he thought it was important in order to present the Palestinian metropolis in a very specific way, not merely because these aspects were common in his works. Therefore the picture of Caesarea that emerges from what the bishop actually said about it may reveal the way in which Eusebius thought it most efficient to support a prominent role for his city – and his see – in the ecclesiastical politics of the period.

There are essentially only two works in which Eusebius dealt with Caesarea, and even then in a minimal way: *The Ecclesiastical History* and the *Martyrs of Palestine*. The mentions of the city in the latter are relatively unproblematic since its main purpose was to record all the martyrdoms suffered

11 For the date, see Richard Burgess, "The Dates and Editions of Eusebius' *Chronici Canones* and *Historia Ecclesiastica*," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 48/2 (1997), pp. 502–503.

12 Eusebius, *The Martyrs of Palestine* (hereafter cited as *MP*), ed. Eduard Schwartz, *Die Kirchengeschichte*, 3 vols (Leipzig, 1903–1909), 4.15, 2:907–950.

13 Eusebius, *MP* 7.7.

14 Eusebius, *MP* 6.1–2.

15 Eusebius, *MP* 4.15.

16 Eusebius, *MP* 3.2.

17 Eusebius, *MP* 6.3.

18 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* (hereafter cited as *HE*), ed. Eduard Schwartz, *Die Kirchengeschichte*, 10.4.2–72; Eusebius, *In Praise of Constantine*, ed. Ivar Heikel, *Über das Leben Constantins, Constantins Rede an die heilige Versammlung, Tricennatsrede an Constantin* (Leipzig, 1902), 11–18, pp. 223–259. For the identification of the speech, see Harold Drake, *In Praise of Constantine: A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial Orations* (Berkeley, 1976), pp. 38–42.

19 Eusebius, *VC* 3.50.

by Palestinian Christians, or by foreign Christians tried in Palestine, during the persecutions of Diocletian (303–305) and Maximinus Daia (305–311).²⁰ Caesarea was the main space where the narrative took place because it was there that the governors, or even Maximinus, sat when they tried Christians and put them to death. However, the city itself did not receive a treatment of its own in this work, being more a stage than a proper actor in the persecutions. The local Christian community, for example, was virtually ignored in the *Martyrs* – there is not a single mention of the bishop of the time, and only two of local priests and deacons.²¹ Everything that interested Eusebius about the local Christians was the school of Pamphilus, to which he himself belonged. He treated it as an ideal church, whose members were entirely committed to the study of the sacred scriptures and to the confession of faith until the extreme of martyrdom.²² Possibly Eusebius intended to focus on the circle of Pamphilus and his friends not only for self-promotion, but also to criticize the then bishop of Caesarea, with whom he probably had had a bad relationship.²³ Be that it as it may, Eusebius' attention to Caesarea in the *Martyrs* is not a celebration of his see as a privileged centre of Christianity due to the glorious recent past of the martyrs, but rather it is a commemoration of the Palestinian Christians that betrays the author's friendships and enmities within this group.

In my view, more representative is the depiction of Caesarea offered by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*,²⁴ especially because here he puts his see

20 In the *Martyrs*, Eusebius did not record the last phase of Maximinus' persecution, after the death of Galerius until the persecutor's final defeat under Licinius in 313. This he relegated only to the *Ecclesiastical History*.

21 These are the deacon and exorcist Romanus, martyred at Antioch and Eusebius' own master, Pamphilus, who was a local presbyter: Eusebius, *MP* 2.1 and 11.1 respectively.

22 Eusebius dealt both with the description of Pamphilus' school and the martyrdom of most of its members: Eusebius, *MP* 11.

23 As can be suggested by the fact that Eusebius never mentioned him in any of his works. This suggestion was already made by Glenn Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius*, 2nd ed. (Macon, G.A., 1986), p. 122, although based exclusively on the *Ecclesiastical History*.

24 It is not the aim of this paper to deal with the delicate debate about the *Ecclesiastical History*'s original date of publication and its subsequent versions. It is enough to state here that the work was already circulating in a shorter version (not including book 10) around 313/4 and that its final touches were given by Eusebius soon after the council of Nicaea (325). For a good survey of this debate, see Friedhelm Winkelmann, "Historiography in the Age of Constantine," in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century AD*. ed. Gabriele Marasco (Leiden, 2003), pp. 5–7. Winkelmann supports the hypothesis of an earlier version with books 1–7 being published before the outbreak of the Great Persecution. The *communis opinio* now, however, is that of Burgess, who claims

in relation to other Christian churches, and traces a history of the development of the local Christian community which confers on it a special place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of his age. Since these mentions are not too many, it is useful to start by listing them all:

- 2.3.3 The conversion of the centurion Cornelius by the apostle Peter in Caesarea, according to the *Acts of the Apostles* 10:1–3
- 2.10.1 Death of Herod Agrippa in Caesarea, according to Flavius Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities* 19.8.2) and the *Acts of the Apostles* (12:19–23)
- 3.31.5 The apostle Philip and his four daughters living in Caesarea, according to *Acts of the Apostles* 21:8–9
- 5.22.1 Theophilus as bishop of Caesarea in the tenth year of the emperor Commodus (189/190)
- 6.19.16 Origen is granted permission to preach at Caesarea by the bishops Theoctistus of Caesarea and Alexander of Jerusalem
- 6.23.4 Origen is consecrated as a presbyter by the bishop of Caesarea
- 6.26 Origen moves to Caesarea in the tenth year of the emperor Alexander Severus (231/2)
- 6.27 Firmilian of Caesarea Cappadocia follows Origen in a journey back to Caesarea Maritima
- 6.28 Origen dedicates his *On Martyrdom* to his patron Ambrosius and to Protoctetus, an otherwise unknown presbyter of Caesarea
- 6.30 The school of Origen in Caesarea
- 6.32 List of books written by Origen during his stay in Caesarea
- 6.39.2 Alexander of Jerusalem is tried and dies in prison in Caesarea under Decius (249–251)
- 7.5.1 Theoctistus supports the bishop of Rome against the heresy of Novatus in the East
- 7.12 Martyrdoms in Caesarea under Valerian (253–260)
- 7.14.1 Succession of Theoctistus by Domnus as bishop of Caesarea, and later by Theotecnus, “our contemporary”
- 7.15 Martyrdom of the centurion Marinus in Caesarea, and the exhortation of Theotecnus, so that the martyr remained faithful until the end
- 7.16 A local Roman senator named Astyrius aids the burial of Marinus

that the first edition contained books 1–8 and was not finished before 313: Burgess, “The Dates and Editions of Eusebius,” pp. 497–502.

- 7.28.1 Theotecnus is one of the bishops involved in the affair of bishop Paul of Samosata in Antioch
- 7.32.21 Theotecnus ordains Anatolius as “co-bishop” in Caesarea – the latter would become bishop of Laodicea in Syria soon afterwards
- 7.32.24–25 Agapius succeeds Theotecnus. Eusebius meets Pamphilus for the first time in Caesarea

Based on this list, we can start by noticing that Eusebius' treatment of Caesarea in the *Ecclesiastical History* limits itself to books two to seven, which comprise the period from apostolic times up to the beginning of the Great Persecution. Therefore nothing is said about the foundation of the city by Herod, the beginning of its rule by Rome, or even about Christian martyrdoms at the start of the fourth century, this last aspect being reserved exclusively for the *Martyrs of Palestine*. Furthermore, it can be seen that three main topics dominate Eusebius' assessment of Caesarea: apostolic, meaning episcopal succession; martyrdoms; and orthodoxy. Not surprisingly, these are important themes throughout the *Ecclesiastical History*, being already announced in its preface,²⁵ and subsequently developed in relation to several different Christian sees. However, they are treated in a distinctive way in the case of the Palestinian metropolis.

Eusebius had a strong interest in showing the continuous succession of bishops in all Christian sees stretching back to the time of the apostles. In the preface, he had already stated that it would be impossible to do this for all Christian communities, but he would do his best to follow the track of the succession in the most important cities.²⁶ For this reason, the author followed closely the succession in the cities of Rome, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, even if he could not access reliable information about them all the time.²⁷ For other sees, such as Corinth or Laodicea, he could only name one or two bishops of the sequence, although not always in direct succession.²⁸ As for Caesarea, his approach was somewhat different. Eusebius started with the beginnings of Christianity in his own city by referring to the conversion of Cornelius and his family by the apostle Peter; but nowhere does he state that Peter was the first bishop of the city. For him, it was important just to remind

25 Eusebius, *HE* 1.1.1–2.

26 Eusebius, *HE* 1.1.4.

27 In the case of Jerusalem, Eusebius had to rely on episcopal lists preserved in the library of the local church, that even he thought were not good evidence – they only recorded the names of the bishops, not the length of their tenure: Eusebius, *HE* 4.5.1–2.

28 For Corinth, see Eusebius, *HE* 4.23, and for Laodicea 7.32.5–23.

his readers that the authority of the local community derived from the one whom he called “the strong and great apostle, marked out by his qualities as the spokesman of all the rest”²⁹ – a clear sign of ecclesiastical superiority. Due to this, Eusebius paid little attention to the mention in the *Acts of the Apostles* that the apostle Philip and his four daughters lived in the city, never developing it further elsewhere. For Eusebius’ purposes, Peter’s association with Caesarea was much more important than Philip’s.

The first bishop that Eusebius could ascribe to his own city was Theophilus, someone he knew was involved in the Paschal controversy of the end of the second century. In fact, Eusebius possessed a letter from a local Palestinian synod of that time, signed, among others, by Theophilus, in which it was stated that the local bishops supported the position held by the bishops of Rome and Alexandria that Easter should always be celebrated on a Sunday.³⁰ It was only by means of this letter that Eusebius could know anything about this predecessor. He did not seem to know anything else about him, not even when he assumed office, when he died, or even who was his immediate successor. If local tradition had something else to say about him, Eusebius did not think it was necessary to record such information. The next bishop of Caesarea that Eusebius could point to was Theoctistus, who was already in office under Caracalla (212–217), although our author did not know when he became the head of the Caesarean Church. Interestingly, of the three pieces of information that Eusebius had about Theoctistus, two were derived from written sources. The first one came from a letter preserved in the library of Caesarea related to the dispute between Origen and Demetrius, a bishop of Alexandria with whom the former had serious divergences, which led him to leave his native Alexandria and seek protection in Palestine. The letter was addressed by Theoctistus and Narcissus of Jerusalem to an unknown bishop, possibly Pontianus of Rome, and explained why they had granted authorization for a mere layman to preach in the local churches.³¹ The second piece of evidence Eusebius took from one of the letters of bishop Dionysius of Alexandria *On Baptism* addressed to Stephanus of Rome, in which he showed support for the Roman bishop against the heresy of Novatus and listed the eastern bishops

29 Eusebius, *HE* 2.14.6.

30 Eusebius mentions the existence of this letter in Eusebius, *HE* 5.23.3 and then quotes a brief extract from it in 5.25.

31 Eusebius, *HE* 6.19.17–18. For further discussion of this letter and of the identification of the addressee, see Andrew Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea* (Leiden, 2003), pp. 181–182.

who were also favourable to him.³² Only the last piece of information about Theoctistus did not come from a written source: his involvement in the martyrdom of Marinus.

The rest of the episcopal succession in Caesarea seems to derive from oral tradition or personal knowledge, since Eusebius states that he himself was a contemporary of Xystus of Rome, by whose time Domnus and Theotecnus were bishops in Caesarea.³³ Apart from the indications of when they assumed or quitted office, Eusebius did not say much about them besides what he could assert with the aid of written documents. So Theotecnus was recorded as one of the bishops who attended the synod of Antioch (268) that condemned Paul of Samosata for heresy and for violation of ecclesiastical discipline. Eusebius only recorded this because he could quote the synodal letter that contained Theotecnus' signature.³⁴ The other piece of information associated with him is related to Anatolius of Laodicea, a cleric that Eusebius knew much better than Theotecnus due to his vivid interest in his literary production;³⁵ it is not unlikely that Eusebius was aware of this relationship through what he knew about Anatolius, not about Theotecnus. Finally, Eusebius surely knew Agapius personally, since by that time he had met Pamphilus in Caesarea. Despite this, he could only say that Agapius was a man thoughtful for his community and that he assisted the poor. What he actually did during his episcopate, or what Eusebius thought of him, we will never know. The fact that Eusebius did not say that Agapius was bishop at the time of the persecution in 303 may be a sign that he died before this.³⁶ If we accept this hypothesis, it must be conceded that the author disliked Agapius' successor, and did not think him fit to be mentioned in the succession.

When it comes to martyrdom, it is surprising that Eusebius failed to mention the local martyrs from the time of the Great Persecution in the *Ecclesiastical History*. As can be noted in the list above, there is not a single explicit mention of Caesarea in the last three books, which dealt with the history from the publication of the first persecutory edicts of 303 until Constantine's final defeat of Licinius in 324. Here Eusebius included a broad narrative of the persecutions, recording martyrdoms that occurred in Egypt, Phoenicia, Syria, and even in

32 Eusebius, *HE* 7.5.1–2.

33 Eusebius, *HE* 7.14.

34 Eusebius, *HE* 7.30.2–17.

35 About Anatolius, see Eusebius, *HE* 7.32.6–21.

36 All chapter 32 of book 7 describes the state of the churches just prior to the beginning of the Great Persecution. Apart from Agapius, Eusebius explicitly indicates who the most important bishops were by the time of the first imperial edicts against the Christians.

distant Pontus.³⁷ As the author stated, he reserved the situation in Palestine to his *Martyrs of Palestine*.³⁸ Instead, he focused on earlier martyrdoms, not mentioned elsewhere, that helped to consolidate the image of Caesarea as a traditional place of confessions of Christ even before the Great Persecution. As in the case of episcopal succession, however, Eusebius was unable to trace any relevant martyrdom to the very beginnings of local Christianity. He had to satisfy himself with martyrs from the third century, beginning with Alexander of Jerusalem, who died in prison under the reign of Decius (249–251). Likewise, during the reign of Valerian, Eusebius does not seem to have known any particularly important martyr of Caesarea. This made him appeal to very humble peasants – including a Marcionite – as examples of the continuous sequence of confessions in the city.

Finally, when dealing with the orthodoxy of his see, Eusebius always associated it with two key figures: Origen and the bishop of Rome. The first case is easy to explain, since Eusebius was a great admirer of the Alexandrian presbyter. He dedicated to him a major part of book 6 of the *Ecclesiastical History* and he wrote, together with Pamphilus, an *Apology for Origen*.³⁹ Despite modern debates about the extent to which Eusebius' thought was influenced by the theology of Origen, it is undeniable that he was indeed a major influence.⁴⁰ It is natural then that Eusebius highlighted Theoctistus' support of him against Demetrius, as well as the ordination of Origen in Caesarea and his connections with local clerics such as Protoctetus. Eusebius was concerned to show Origen's connections in the East in a very extensive way, in order to claim that there was an overall respect for his figure in his own times, which could be used to refute contemporary criticism about the Alexandrian presbyter. However, it is noteworthy that all these connections, such as the ones with Ambrosius and Firmilianus of Cappadocian Caesarea, tended to be centred in Origen's activities in Palestinian Caesarea, not in Alexandria – a subtle way of bolstering Caesarea's claim to be the true Origenist centre of the East. As long

37 Eusebius gives a summary of the churchmen, from the most diverse provinces, martyred under Diocletian and Galerius: Eusebius, *HE* 8.13. In the previous chapter (8.12), he mentioned martyrdoms that took place in Mesopotamia and in Pontus. There are also chapters devoted to the martyrs of Phoenicia (8.7), Egypt (8.8), the Thebaid (8.9), and Phrygia (8.11).

38 Eusebius, *HE* 8.13.7. For further comments on this passage and its relation to the composition of the *Martyrs*, see Burgess, "The Dates and Editions of Eusebius," pp. 502–503.

39 About the *Apology*, see Timothy Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, pp. 199–201.

40 For the indebtedness of Eusebius' theological thought to Origen, see Timothy Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, pp. 93–105, and Richard Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy, 318–381* (Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 46–59.

as Eusebius considered Origen to be one of the most important theologians of all time, associating Caesarea with him was a means to increase its ecclesiastical prestige. Furthermore, he was greatly interested in Origen's pedagogical work in Caesarea, both when dealing with the catechetical school Origen established there and with the books he produced in the city. It seems that Eusebius was trying to set a precedent for Pamphilus' own pedagogical and scholarly enterprise, of which the author himself was a continuator.

As for the Roman bishops as a touchstone of orthodoxy, it is significant to observe that Eusebius never censured them for doctrinal matters and that, so far as he could, he showed the alignment of Caesarean bishops with them. This is not the case even for bishops of Alexandria, Jerusalem or Antioch, who sometimes could have strong quarrels with the Caesarean see not hidden by Eusebius in his work, such as the dispute between Theoctistus and Demetrius concerning Origen. The only less positive remark about the bishops of Rome made by Eusebius comes when he quotes Irenaeus of Lyon's criticisms of Victor of Rome for creating a schism in the Church by the excommunication of the Asian Christians over their Quartodeciman customs.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the criticism did not affect the righteousness of Victor's claim that the Quartodecimans were heretics. Moreover, the affirmation of the coincidence of Roman and Caesarean affirmation of orthodoxy is supported by documents addressed to, or that spoke about, Roman bishops, all of them preserved in the library of Caesarea, even if they were not produced by or addressed to the clergy of Caesarea.⁴² The very existence of these documents in the Palestinian library, as well as Eusebius' vivid interest in employing them to support the cause of the orthodoxy of his see, must be regarded as important evidence of Eusebius' reverence for Rome as a centre of orthodoxy.

As a matter of fact, the association between Rome and Caesarea is a constant feature in Eusebius' assessment of his see. In part, this may be due to local ideology that emphasized Caesarea's connections with Rome as a legitimising factor of its provincial prominence. After all, apart from being the regular seat of the provincial governor, Caesarea was a Roman colony already in the reign of Vespasian, with special privileges granted to its citizens based

41 Eusebius, *HE* 5.24.11–18.

42 It is interesting to note, for example, that all the letters of Dionysius of Alexandria *On baptism* quoted by Eusebius were addressed to Roman clergymen: Eusebius, *HE* 7.4–5. This point was not developed by Carriker, although he noticed the existence of the dossier: Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea*, pp. 202–203. It certainly deserves further research.

on their alliance with Rome.⁴³ Yet there is more. In the ecclesiastical sphere, Eusebius saw a deep relationship between the sees of the two cities through the apostle Peter, whom he regarded as the founder of Christianity in both places. Furthermore, this connection put both cities in equal balance when it came to ecclesiastical authority.

In a later text known as the *Theophany*, written after 324,⁴⁴ Eusebius further developed this thought. In the fourth book of this treatise, he began by explaining the theological basis of the Christian preaching to the gentiles as foretold by Christ in the episode of the cure of the servant of the chiliarch of Capernaum.⁴⁵ According to Eusebius, since the Jews rejected the Messiah and his Gospel, it was necessary that salvation be preached to all the nations. However, Christ needed the help of disciples for that. Eusebius then goes to the passage of the calling of Peter and Andrew and their denomination as “fishers of men”,⁴⁶ by which he understood that they were chosen to preach the Gospel to the entire world. His depiction of Peter in this scene is not entirely favourable, since he describes him here as a “barbarian”, a mere “Galilean”. Nevertheless, he regards him as the one mainly responsible for the Christianisation of the Gentiles and for the growth of the Church, as can be seen in the following passage:

This Syrian fisherman therefore, this net-caster, by means of his net, the texture of which was by the Divine power composed of the words of mystery, caught innumerable multitudes of men. And the visual perception of something hidden is something visible. The things therefore, which the long life of the world, and which from the first experienced not the rising (as of the Sun) of our Saviour, could not effect: the things which neither Moses who gave the law to the Hebrews, nor the Prophets who

43 See Joseph Patrich, *Studies in the Archaeology and History of Caesarea Maritima: Caput Judaeae, Metropolis Palaestinae* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 71–78.

44 For the date, see Timothy Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, p. 367 (footnote 176), who argues for a very early date (“very shortly after 324”). The *Theophany* only survived in a full Syriac translation and a few Greek fragments. For the latter, see Hugo Gressmann, *Die Theophanie* (Leipzig, 1904), who also offers a German translation of the former (hereafter cited as *Theophany*). Fortunately, the passages discussed below appear in Gressmann’s Greek fragment 6 (pp. 17*–21*). In what follows, I use Samuel Lee’s English translation of the Syriac version: Samuel Lee, *Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea on the Theophania or Divine Manifestation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Translated into English with Notes from an Ancient Syriac Version of the Greek Original Now Lost* (Cambridge, 1843), modified following the Greek text.

45 The crucial passage to Eusebius here is Matt. 8:10–12.

46 Matt. 4:18–19.

came after Moses, could; nor yet the multitudes of others, who from ancient times carried as fishermen the doctrine of God to man, and who toiled throughout the whole night which preceded his manifestation, could do, this Galilean, this Pauper, this barbarian, this Peter, by means of his voice brought to pass. The demonstrations indeed, then given of Peter as to these things are the churches which up to this time have arisen, far more in number than the ships (then present), and these, filled with fish that are rational. Such is this one of Caesarea of Palestine, and such is that of Antioch of Syria; and such is that of Rome; for, by these churches which Peter set up, and by all those near them, are these things commemorated.⁴⁷

Nowhere else in Eusebius' works is the connection between Rome and Caesarea more explicit than in this passage, in which both are depicted as Petrine foundations that incorporated the Gentiles into the Church. Nowhere else too is the intimate association of these sees more efficiently used to downplay the importance of rival sees. Note, for example, how Jerusalem is put aside in this fragment's account of the expansion of the early Church. This could be understood as a subtle way of displacing the centre of the Christian mission from Jerusalem, the city of the Jews *par excellence* – whom Eusebius considered to have rejected the Christ – to the churches founded by Peter, the true and most important representative of the Lord. This elusive downplaying of rival sees is more explicit in the continuation of the passage above, where Eusebius dealt with the relationship between Peter and Alexandria:

Those too that are in Egypt and in Alexandria itself, did he [Peter] again, not by his own means, but by those of Mark, his disciple, erect. Of those also, that are in Italy and among the nations adjoining, he was the Steward: and he made his disciple Mark the Teacher and Fisherman of those in Egypt.⁴⁸

So Eusebius considered that Caesarea and Alexandria had different standings in the Church's hierarchy, since the former was a see truly founded by Peter – and therefore filled with his authority – and the latter was merely a see founded by one of his disciples. It cannot be inferred from this that Eusebius expected Alexandria to pay respect for the authority of Caesarea, but certainly he did not expect the inverse to be the case.

47 Eusebius, *Theophany* 4.6, fragment 6, pp. 19*–20*.

48 Eusebius, *Theophany* 4.6, fragment 6, p. 20*.

As can be seen, Eusebius' main focus when dealing with Caesarea was to expose key themes that could reinforce the ecclesiastical prestige of his see. In this context, martyrdom and orthodoxy came up as natural candidates, since he regarded them as the pillars of the Christian Church. Yet the connections with apostolic tradition through Peter, and thence with Rome, illustrate that Caesarea's commitment to orthodoxy and martyrdom was somewhat distinct from the other sees nearby. In other words, the approximation of Caesarea to Rome was meant to mark its detachment from, if not superiority over, other rival sees. As can be seen in the passage quoted above, Eusebius intended to associate Caesarea with Rome to put both in a position of superiority as foundations of the one he regarded as the most important apostle. In this sense, Alexandria would be lowered, since it was merely a community founded by a subordinate to Peter, while Jerusalem would lack even this as long as it was regarded as the centre of the old covenant.

If we turn back to the *Ecclesiastical History*, we can see that the emphasis on this topic is consistent. In this work, the bishops of Caesarea and Rome, being both direct descendants of Peter, never disagreed in doctrinal matters. Antioch, although also a Petrine foundation, could not claim the same status due to the episode of Paul of Samosata. In turn, Alexandria had already had bishops who sided against the leaders of the Caesarean church. Interestingly though, Eusebius here did not downplay the importance of the bishops of Jerusalem, as the same case of Origen shows that Theoctistus and Narcissus of Jerusalem worked together in favour of the Alexandrian presbyter.

It seems that, when writing the *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius was more concerned with detaching Caesarea from the influence of Alexandria than with lowering the status of Jerusalem. In part, this can be explained by the fact that the work was written well before the bishops of Jerusalem, namely Macarius and Maximus, started claiming that it should be their see, not Caesarea, that should be the ecclesiastical metropolis of Palestine. As Zeev Rubin has pointed out, the conflict between these two sees actually appears in the works of Eusebius, but only at a later date, especially in the *Life of Constantine*, a work of the 330s.⁴⁹ The *Ecclesiastical History*, however, was finished in its final version in the years around the council of Nicaea (325),⁵⁰ just when the

49 Zeev Rubin, "The Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Conflict Between the Sees of Caesarea and Jerusalem," in *Jerusalem Cathedra II*, ed. Lee I. Levine (Jerusalem and Detroit, 1982), pp. 79–105; further discussion in idem, "The Cult of the Holy Places and Christian Politics in Byzantine Jerusalem," in *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. Lee I. Irvine (New York, 1999), pp. 151–162.

50 See note 24 above.

dispute for the title of ecclesiastical metropolis of Palestine was beginning. It may be that what concerned Eusebius most was the beginning of another conflict, namely the Arian controversy, which put him on a different side to Alexandrian bishops, first Alexander of Alexandria, then Athanasius (from 328 on). If we presume that the polemic broke out not much later than the end of the persecutions, whether or not we accept the traditional date of 318,⁵¹ there would still be plenty of time for Eusebius to take this issue into account, at least when revising the text in its later versions. An even more plausible possibility would stress Eusebius' concern with the dispute over Origen's intellectual heritage, especially if criticism of him came from Alexandrian clerics, even before the outbreak of the Great Persecution – as the composition of the *Apology for Origen* may suggest. Thus the association with Rome would bolster Caesarea's claim for apostolic authority against Alexandria, in order not only to save Origen's theology from his critics, but also to reinforce Caesarea's prominence as the true Origenist centre of the East.

Be this as it may, one final remark must be made about Eusebius' method. As argued above, Eusebius only referred to Caesarea in his historical texts, and even when he mentioned it in the *Theophany*, he did so in a theological argument deeply imbedded in historical logic – namely, that it was the preaching of Peter to the Gentiles and his foundation of the two churches that put Rome and Caesarea side by side. It is not a coincidence therefore that Eusebius always appealed to the quotation of documents, usually at length, to prove his arguments. As Arnaldo Momigliano has shown, this is a typical feature of the historical method of Eusebius, being a development of the concern of classical historiography with reliable evidence to support the claims of truthfulness.⁵² In the *Ecclesiastical History*, this put the author sometimes in embarrassing situations, as when he was unable to show many local martyrs before the fourth century, or when he could only start following the local episcopal succession closely from the very end of the second century. Although this was detrimental to Caesarea, compared to the much better state of documentation for sees such as Rome, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, this was necessary for Eusebius, since he believed that it was only through history that Caesarea could make a claim of ecclesiastical prominence. For, being mostly absent from the

51 For a discussion about the date, see Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, pp. 129–132. Obviously Eusebius could not have taken this into account in the first versions of his text, although there were already theological dissensions prior to 318 that would lead to the later controversy.

52 Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley, 1990), pp. 138–142.

Scriptures, there was hardly a theological argument that could be drawn from them to reinforce the position of his see, while neighbouring Jerusalem could count them in thousands. Being aware of this limitation, the author tried to limit himself to the more reliable sources he could dispose of for Caesarea. That is why he focused so much on written documents when dealing with Caesarea, reducing the space for local oral tradition to a minimum in order to avoid the claim of legends.

In sum, Eusebius' depiction of Caesarea was concerned primarily with orthodoxy, martyrdom, and apostolic succession. This was due to the fact that the bishop needed to make a statement about the ecclesiastical prestige of his see to counter possible threats coming either from Jerusalem or from Alexandria. In order to do this, Eusebius had to emphasize the connections of his city with Rome, something he could do through the position of his city as a co-Petrine foundation. More important still, these arguments had to be made in a historical framework instead of a proper theological one, which demanded of the bishop a keen concern for the reliability of his information and of his sources.

Spectatorship in City and Church in Late Antiquity: Theoria Returns to the Festival

*Byron MacDougall**

An imaginative reconstruction of a Late Antique religious festival can be found in the fifth-century *Life and Miracles of Saint Thekla*.¹ The miracle in question involves a group of Cypriot pilgrims who had sailed to Thekla's shrine at Seleukia to attend the saint's festival (έορτή).² While on shore their boat – along with the two youths left aboard to guard it – is swept out to sea by a sudden storm. The saint appears, calms the waves, and leads the boat back into the harbor. What interests us, however, is not the miracle itself but the introduction to the tale, which describes the pilgrims' arrival in Isauria:

Τῶν γάρ τις εὐπατριδῶν καὶ πιστῶν ἐπιβάς ποτε ὀλκάδος παρὰ τὴν μάρτυρα ἠπείγετο, προσεύξομενός τε αὐτῇ καὶ τὴν έορτὴν θεάσασθαι βουλόμενος ἦν ἄγουσι μὲν ἑκάστου ἔτους οἱ καὶ πολίται καὶ σύνοικοι τῆς μάρτυρος, τιμῶσι δὲ πάντες ἄνθρωποι. (*Miracles of Saint Thekla* 15.1)

A man of a noble and believing family embarked once on a merchant vessel and hastened to come to the martyr in order to pray to her and with

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- 1 For text and commentary, see *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle: texte grec, traduction et commentaire*, ed. Gilbert Dagron (Brussels, 1978). For text and English translation of the “miracles” section of the *Life and Miracles*, see *Miracle Tales from Byzantium*, trans. Alice-Mary Talbot and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Cambridge, Mass., 2012), pp. 2–201 (henceforth *Life and Miracles*). For the literary and cultural horizons of the text's anonymous author, see Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, *The Life and Miracles of Thekla: A Literary Study* (Cambridge, Mass., 2006).
- 2 For a use of this passage in an attempted reconstruction of the historical institution of the saint's *panegyris*, see Speros Vryonis, “The Panegyris of the Byzantine Saints: A Study in the Nature of a Medieval Institution, its Origins and Fate,” in *The Byzantine Saint*, ed. Sergei Hackel (London, 1981), pp. 196–227.

the desire to witness her festival (προσεύξομενός τε αὐτῇ καὶ τὴν ἑορτὴν θεάσασθαι βουλόμενος), which is organized each year by the citizens and co-inhabitants with the martyr and which everyone holds in honour.

Our Cypriot pilgrims allude through their actions to the famous introduction to Plato's *Republic* (327a1–b1):

Κατέβην χθές εἰς Πειραιᾶ μετὰ Γλαύκωνος τοῦ Ἀρίστωνος προσεύξομενός τε τῇ θεῷ καὶ ἅμα τὴν ἑορτὴν βουλόμενος θεάσασθαι τίνα τρόπον ποιήσουσιν ἅτε νῦν πρῶτον ἄγοντες. Καλὴ μὲν οὖν μοι καὶ ἡ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων πομπὴ ἔδοξεν εἶναι, οὐ μέντοι ἥττον ἐφαίνετο πρέπειν ἢν οἱ Θράκες ἔπεμπον.

I went down to the Piraeus yesterday with Ariston's son Glaucon to offer my prayers to the goddess and also because I wanted to watch the festival (προσεύξομενός τε τῇ θεῷ καὶ ἅμα τὴν ἑορτὴν βουλόμενος θεάσασθαι) and see how they would perform it, seeing that this was the first time they were holding it. I must say that I thought that the procession of the local people was quite excellent, but the one put on by the Thracian contingent seemed no less impressive.³

The Cypriot family went on pilgrimage in order to pray to Thekla and watch her festival, just as Socrates went down to the Peiraeus to pray to the goddess Bendis and watch the festival celebrated in her honour, the *Bendideia*. The phrasing, as highlighted above, is carefully modelled on the *Republic* passage.⁴ Moreover, the author of the *Life and Miracles* develops the Platonic allusion even further by preserving the differentiation between local celebrants of the cult and visiting pilgrims. This is not just a studied example of late antique Platonic *mimesis*, in which the author of the *Life and Miracles* has produced a point-for-point imitation of the opening scene of the *Republic*. We must note that the author of the *Life and Miracles* has identified and then translated into a Christian setting precisely the constituent elements of the Platonic account of pilgrimage: prayer, the production of a religious spectacle, the ritual contemplation thereof, and the presence of foreign pilgrims who have travelled to join the native celebrants of the cult. Now, this introductory scene has been famous since antiquity; perennially cited is the anecdote of how after Plato's death

3 For text and translation I use here *Plato: Republic*, ed. Chris Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy (Cambridge, Mass., 2014).

4 Though Dagron in *Vie et miracles*, p. 157 does not include this passage in his list of the text's Platonic allusions, citing only 14.31–32, 26.16 and 39.4–5.

multiple drafts of just the first sentence of the *Republic* were found among his papers.⁵ Within the structure of the *Republic* itself, the opening scene carries special significance, and the reader is referred to the studies of Myles Burnyeat and Diskin Clay for discussions of how this ‘prelude’ prefigures the role of the philosopher as it is discussed later in the work, particularly in the ‘Allegory of the Cave’ of Book 7.⁶ Moreover, Andrea Wilson Nightingale and Ian Rutherford have used this passage to demonstrate how Plato and other fourth-century philosophers invented contemplative metaphysical philosophy as we know it, by using the well-known civic practice of festival pilgrimage to delineate a new realm of activity for a new type of philosopher: the contemplation of pure ideas.⁷ In dialogues like the *Phaedrus*, the *Symposium*, and especially the *Republic*, Plato uses the institution of traditional *theoria* – festival pilgrimage and spectatorship – as a metaphor to characterize the ideal philosopher’s contemplative activity: the philosopher is a *theoros*, or pilgrim, who engages in ritual spectatorship, or *theoria*, of “Truth” with a capital “T”:

The fourth-century philosophers favoured this paradigm (i.e. traditional *theoria*) for several reasons. First, they sought to conceptualize a mode of apprehension that took the form of “seeing” divine essences or truths. *Theoria* at religious festivals – in which the pilgrim viewed icons, sacred

5 See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De Compositione Verborum*, in *Dionysii Halicarnasei quae exstant*, vol. 6, ed. Ludwig Rademacher and Hermann Usener (Leipzig, 1929), 25.212–218.

6 Such allegorical readings of the scene at the Peiraeus were already developed by the fifth-century Neoplatonist Proclus, and the possibilities of his method are explored in Myles Burnyeat, “First Words,” *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 43 (1997), 1–20, at 5–6: “The philosophers who have been educated in the ideal city are to do down (καταβατέον, cf. 519d5, 539e2) in turn into the cave where the others live. There they are to become observers (θεάσασθαι – the same verb as at 327a3) and judges (as Socrates was at the festival) of what is fine and just and good in the world below – this being of course the sensible world where we all live now as dramatized in Plato’s famous image of the Cave. Apply the Book 7 passage to the first words of the *Republic*: the Peiraeus at night lit by torches becomes an image of the prison-dwelling in the cave, which in turn is an image (εἰκών, 517a8) of the sensible world as such.”

See also Diskin Clay, “Plato’s First Words,” *Yale Classical Studies* 29 (1992), 113–130, at 125–129.

7 See Andrea Wilson Nightingale’s *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy: Theoria in its Cultural Context* (Cambridge, 2004). See also Ian Rutherford’s “Theoria and Darśan: Pilgrimage and Vision in Greece and India,” *Classical Quarterly* 50 (2000), 133–146 as well as the section on “Philosophy and Theoria” in Rutherford’s recent magisterial study, *State Pilgrims and Sacred Observers in Ancient Greece: A Study of Theōriā and Theōroi* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 324–338.

images, and spectacles – offered a good model for this conception of philosophical ‘vision’. As we have seen, *theoria* at religious sanctuaries and festivals was characterized by a sacralised, ‘ritualized’ visuality.⁸

In this paper I show how the Platonic conceptualization of philosophical contemplation – a conceptualization modelled upon civic festival pilgrimage – remained a vital and productive metaphor into Late Antiquity and beyond. Moreover, philosophical rhetors, pagan and eventually Christian, turn festivals into venues for the performance of Platonic *theoria* – that is, the contemplation of divine truths. In what follows I am first going to use an example from the *progymnasmata* attributed to Libanius to demonstrate the long reach of Plato’s scheme of *theoria*. Then I will juxtapose two rhetors, one pagan and one Christian, as they lead their respective festival audiences in the contemplation of metaphysical/spiritual truths. We shall see how the festival – whether it be the Olympic Games or the Christian festival of Christ’s birth – becomes a space for the performance of Platonic contemplation.

Included in the *progymnasmata*, or preliminary rhetorical school exercises, attributed to Libanius are a set of *ekphraseis* which feature depictions of Ajax, the Chimaera, Herakles carrying the Erymanthian boar, and, of course, that favourite ekphrastic showstopper, the peacock. Also featured are two *ekphraseis* of festivals, one a non-specified *panēgyris* which Foerster believes was falsely attributed to Libanius in the manuscript tradition,⁹ and the other the festival of the Kalends.¹⁰ Long before Libanius’ time these festivals – both *panēgyreis* [πανηγύρεις] and *heortai* [ἑορταί] – had become the main vehicles for the propagation of a self-conscious Hellenism throughout the urban centres of the eastern Mediterranean. With this in mind, and before proceeding with the *ekphrasis* on the festival, we should provide some background on the cultural role of these *panēgyreis* in the imperial centuries.¹¹ In essence these civic festivals were agonistic celebrations of athletics and culture held in the name

8 Nightingale, *Spectacles of Truth*, p. 69.

9 Libanius, *Libanii Opera Vol. VIII: Progymnasmata, Argumenta Orationum Demosthenicarum*, ed. Richard Foerster [Leipzig, 1915 (repr. Hildesheim, 1963)], pp. 538–540 (= *Progymnasmata* 12.29). For Foerster’s doubts on its authenticity see p. 439.

10 Ibidem, pp. 472–477 (= *Progymnasmata* 12.5). This *ekphrasis* on the Kalends is not to be confused with his *Oratio 9 In Kalendas*, for the text of which see Libanius, *Libanii Opera Vol. I.2: Orationes VI–XI*, ed. Richard Foerster [Leipzig, 1913 (repr. Hildesheim, 1963)], pp. 391–398.

11 For general background on festivals in antiquity, see Jon W. Iddeng, “What Is a Graeco-Roman Festival? A Polyethnic Approach,” in *Greek and Roman Festivals: Content, Meaning and Practice*, ed. J. Rasmus Brandt and Jon W. Iddeng (Oxford, 2012), pp. 11–37.

of what we might crudely call a pan-Hellenic identity, and their proliferation in the second and third centuries, particularly under first Hadrian and then the Severans, constitutes a major theme in Second Sophistic scholarship over the last generation.¹² The ubiquity of these festivals throughout the urban centres of the Eastern Mediterranean – Walter Burkert writes of a *Festgemeinschaft* – translated into a ubiquity in the mental landscape of the most literarily sensitive members of that society.¹³ One could point, for example, to the lovingly elaborated *ekphraseis* of festivals in the novels of Heliodorus and Longus.¹⁴

Despite the disruptions to traditional civic life caused by the third-century crisis and the adoption by the state of Christianity in the fourth century, these festivals continued to be held, with some lasting longer than others. Though the original Olympics were banned in 392 AD, the Antiochene Olympics held at Daphne continued until the sixth century.¹⁵ Other festivals, like the Kalends and the Brumalia, would survive until the very end of the seventh century, when they were finally banned at the Council in Trullo (692).¹⁶ At many of these civic festivals it had become obligatory for an official representative of literary

12 Much of this scholarship was stimulated through the publication by Michael Wörrle of a lengthy second-century AD inscription from the site of Oenoanda in Lycia that records in detail the establishment of a festival devoted to athletic and cultural contests and called the *Demostheneia* after its founder C. Iulius Demosthenes. See Michael Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien: Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda* (Munich, 1988). For a review of Wörrle's monograph as well as an English translation and discussion of the inscription, see Stephen Mitchell, "Festivals, Games and Civic Life in Roman Asia Minor," *Journal of Roman Studies* 80 (1990), 183–193. See also Otto Van Nijf, "Athletics, Festivals and Greek Identity in the Roman East," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 45 (January 2000), 176–200.

13 Walter Burkert, "Die antike Stadt als Festgemeinschaft," in *Stadt und Fest. Zur Geschichte und Gegenwart europäischer Festkultur*, ed. Paul Hugger, Walter Burkert, and Ernst Lichtenhahn (Stuttgart, 1987), pp. 25–44. See also now his "Ancient Views on Festivals: A Case of Near Eastern Mediterranean Koine," in *Greek and Roman Festivals*, pp. 39–52.

14 For Heliodorus' depiction of a festival at Delphi see Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, ed. Aristides Colonna (Rome, 1938) 2.34–3.6. For Longus' festivals see *Daphnis et Chloe*, ed. Michael Reeve (Stuttgart, 1994) at 2.1–2 for a festival celebrating the wine vintage, as well as 2.30–37 for a rustic celebration of Pan and the nymphs that reads like a pastoral miniature of a great *panēgyris*. Finally see Rutherford, *State Pilgrims*, pp. 349–354 on the use of festivals, throughout Greek literature and especially in the novels, as settings for hero and heroine to fall in love.

15 Ruth Webb, *Demons and Dancers: Performance in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., 2008), p. 35.

16 See Michael Maas' preface to Ioannes Lydus, *On the Months*, ed. and trans. Anastasius Bandy (Lewiston and New York, 2013), p. xxiii.

culture – in other words, a *rhetor* – to deliver a piece of polished prose that expounded the significance of the festival at hand.¹⁷ The most familiar sources for these festival orations are found in the two treatises on epideictic rhetoric attributed to Menander Rhetor – particularly the “sample” oration in honour of the festival of Sminthian Apollo – as well as a section on festival speeches (called a “*technē* concerning festival speeches [τέχνη περὶ τῶν πανηγυρικών]”) included in another manual on epideictic rhetoric, attributed falsely in the manuscript tradition to Dionysius of Halicarnassus.¹⁸ Apart from the rhetorical handbooks, the prose hymns of Aelius Aristides represent another corpus of orations that purport to have been performed at festivals.¹⁹ The *rhetor* at the festival even makes an appearance in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*: at the *Ploiaphesia* or “Releasing of the Ships” festival in Book 11, a highlight of the program is an oration of thanksgiving performed by a *grammateus* in honour of the festival.²⁰ These institutions – festivals and the speeches performed at them – loom large in what has become by the fourth century a particularly ripe rhetorical tradition indeed. We turn now to the festival *ekphrasis* attributed to Libanius to study the literary work that the festival tradition can perform. Though Libanius’ authorship of the text is doubted (see above n. 9), it nevertheless offers a representative perspective on the cultural horizons of Late Antique rhetors and their audiences.

The *ekphrasis* of the *panēgyris* features a description of the festival’s climactic public sacrifice, which is followed by general feasting throughout the city:

ἐστιῶνται δὲ οἱ μὲν ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς, οἱ δὲ οἴκοι. καὶ δέονται πολῖται ξένων παρὰ σφίσιν εὐωχεῖσθαι. καὶ ἐν τῷ πότῳ φιλῖαι μὲν ἀρχαῖαι βεβαιοῦνται μειζόνως, αἱ δὲ ἀρχὴν λαμβάνουσιν. ἐξανιστάμενοι δὲ οἱ μὲν τοὺς ξένους παραλαμβάνοντες

17 See, for example, the contest in “prose encomia” stipulated in lines 39–40 of the Oenoanda inscription for the fifth day of the *Demostheneia* festival. For the text, see Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest*, pp. 8–9, as well as pp. 248–250, for discussion of these encomia and the *rhetoires* who performed them.

18 See *Menander Rhetor*, ed. Donald Russell and Nigel Wilson (Oxford, 1981), 1.1.333–344 (“Hymns to the Gods”) and 2.17.437.5–446.13 (description of the *Sminthiakos logos*). See also the appendix at pp. 362–381, in which the editors provide a translation from the section devoted to festival speeches of the treatise *On Epideictic Speeches* falsely attributed to Dionysius of Halicarnassus. For the edition of the text, see *Dionysii Halicarnasei quae exstant*, pp. 256–260.

19 For these prose hymns and the circumstances of their production and performance, see Johann Goeken, *Aelius Aristide et la rhétorique de l’hymne en prose* (Turnhout, 2012).

20 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* ed. Maaike Zimmerman (Oxford, 2012), 11.17, p. 271.

δεικνύουσιν ὅτι ἐν τῇ πόλει θέας ἄξιον, οἱ δὲ ἐν ἀγορᾷ συγκαθήμενοι διαλέγονται
σὺν φαιδρότητι [...]. (*Progym.* 12.29.8)

Some feast in the temples, others at home. And citizens invite foreign visitors to dine together with them. And amidst their cups old friendships are reaffirmed and strengthened while new ones are begun. And then after getting up from dinner some take the visitors around and show them what is worth seeing in the city, while others sit together in the agora and converse in joyousness.²¹

The final activity listed in this description of pilgrimage or *theoria* at a festival is noteworthy: to sit in the agora and engage in dialogue (ἐν ἀγορᾷ συγκαθήμενοι διαλέγονται) might not seem the behaviour one expects at a festival so much as the activity proverbially characteristic of Socratic dialogues.²² Moreover, the act of “sitting down” as a preliminary to engaging in philosophical dialogue is almost obligatory when evoking a Platonic atmosphere: the verb καθίζομαι features no less than four times in the opening of the *Phaedrus* when Socrates and the title character journey outside the city walls to talk.²³ In fact, such a Platonic atmosphere is precisely the author’s aim: this entire passage is based, once again, on the opening of Plato’s *Republic*. The description of *theoria* at a festival in this *ekphrasis* takes its inspiration from the same description we saw before of the *Bendideia* that begins Book 1. Polemarchus, the son of Cephalus, has spotted Socrates and Glaucon returning to Athens and entreats them to stay and dine with him and his father and then attend the night spectacle afterwards (328a6–b1):

Οὕτως, ἔφη ὁ Πολέμαρχος. καὶ πρὸς γε παννυχίδα ποιήσουσιν, ἣν ἄξιον θεάσασθαι· ἐξαναστησόμεθα γὰρ μετὰ τὸ δεῖπνον καὶ τὴν παννυχίδα θεασόμεθα. καὶ συνεσόμεθά τε πολλοῖς τῶν νέων αὐτόθι καὶ διαλεξόμεθα. Ἄλλὰ μένετε καὶ μὴ ἄλλως ποιεῖτε.

21 Unless specified otherwise, this and all subsequent translations are my own.

22 See James Doyle, “On the First Eight Lines of Plato’s *Gorgias*,” *Classical Quarterly* 56/2 (2006), 599–602, at 601 for “dialogue in the agora” as a characteristically Socratic activity.

23 228e5, 229a2, 229a7 and 229b2. Note also that when Achilles Tatius recreates this scene from the *Phaedrus*, he makes sure to have his two speakers “sit down together” before beginning their tale. See Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, ed. Ebbe Vilborg (Stockholm, 1955) 1.2.3: καθίσας οὖν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τινος θώκου χαμαὶ ζήλου καὶ αὐτὸς παρακαθισάμενος.

“Just so,” said Polemarchus, “and in addition they will celebrate a night-festival, which is worth watching. For we will get up after dinner and watch the night-festival. And we will join many of the young men there and converse. Just stay and don’t do otherwise.”

In each of the two passages the order of events is exactly parallel. First, the sacrifice: the *ekphrasis* describes a processional train with sons following fathers towards the temple, where “after having sacrificed each participant departs as the next approaches to do the same.”²⁴ In the *Republic*, after accepting Polemarchus’ invitation to come dine with him, Socrates arrives at his house to find Polemarchus’ father Cephalus just as he has completed the sacrifice before the banquet (328c3). After the sacrifice the meal or banquet is to follow, and in the *Republic* just as in the *ekphrasis* the locals (Polemarchus and Cephalus, who live in the Peiraeus) invite visitors, in this case Socrates and his Athenian friends, to dine with them. After the meal everyone is to “get up” (ἐξανιστάμενοι *Progym.* 12.29.8; cf. ἐξαναστησόμεθα at *Rep.* 328a7) as the hosts take the visitors around to see the sights of the city (ὅτι ἐν τῇ πόλει θεᾶς ἄξιον; cf. παννυχίδα ποιήσουσιν, ἣν ἄξιον θεάσασθαι 328a6–7); alternatively, the guests and hosts are to “converse together” (ἐν ἀγορᾷ συγκαθήμενοι διαλέγονται; cf. συνεσόμεθα τε πολλοῖς τῶν νέων αὐτόθι καὶ διαλεξόμεθα 328a8–9).²⁵ As the revelers of the *ekphrasis* sit down and talk with one another, so Socrates sits down next to Cephalus and begins the conversation that we know as the *Republic*.

What then are we to imagine the characters in the *ekphrasis* “conversing about” at the festival? What subject for discussion is being set out as an alternative festive activity to taking visitors on a sightseeing tour of the city? In other words, what might the author have in mind as an alternative to “traditional” *theoria* or festival pilgrimage? For a possible answer we might turn to two festival speeches by philosopher-rhetors: Dio Chrysostom’s twelfth or “Olympic” oration; and Gregory of Nazianzus on Theophany or the Nativity of Christ (*Or.* 38). Both texts recommend as the proper activity for true festival-lovers

24 Libanius, *Progymnasmata* 12.29.5–6, p. 539: καὶ πατράσι συνομαρτοῦσιν υἱεῖς, οἱ μὲν ἤδη αἰσθανόμενοι θεῶν ἰσχύος, οἱ δὲ κομιδῇ νέοι. ὁ μὲν τις ἄπεισι τεθυκῶς, ὁ δὲ ἔρχεται τοῦτο δρᾶσων.

25 Thus, it seems also that the remark in this same *ekphrasis* about how “old friendships are reaffirmed and strengthened” (φιλίαι μὲν ἀρχαῖαι βεβαιοῦνται μειζόνως, 12.29.8, p. 539) looks back to the exchange between Socrates and Cephalus, whom Socrates says he “had not seen for some time” (διὰ χρόνου γὰρ καὶ ἑωράκη αὐτόν, 328c1–2) and who in turn chides Socrates for not visiting him more often (νῦν δέ σε χρὴ πυκνότερον δεῦρο ἰέναι, 328d2).

the contemplation of divine truths, or Platonic *theoria*. Both rhetors lead their respective festival audiences towards this goal through what we might call “Platonically-inflected God-talk” – and it is in such God-talk that we should imagine the festival guests of the *ekphrasis* engaging.

Gregory of Nazianzus’ status as a favourite author was unrivalled in Byzantium, and among his most popular works were the festival orations on Theophany/Christmas, Epiphany, Easter and Pentecost.²⁶ Indicative of the esteem in which they were held is the fact that they were among the 16 orations chosen at some point by the tenth century to be read aloud as part of the liturgy on their respective feast days throughout the calendar year.²⁷ Gregory’s purpose as a rhetor at the Christian *panēgyreis* of Christmas and Easter is to communicate his vision of God to his audience. This is in fact how he defines the act of “celebrating a *panēgyris*” in the Pentecost oration: he and his audience are to “store up” in their souls true images of the divine.²⁸ This *contemplative* quality is the chief characteristic of a Christian festival, and throughout these orations it is juxtaposed against the decidedly material and worldly nature of pagan festivals.²⁹ In his oration on the Holy Lights, a feast dedicated to the Baptism of Christ, Gregory continues the conceit – all festivals involve some sort of *spectacle*, and the spectacle of this Christian festival is to be the godhead itself:

Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀνεκαθήραμεν τῷ λόγῳ τὸ θέατρον, φέρε τι περὶ τῆς ἑορτῆς ἥδη φιλοσοφήσωμεν, καὶ συνεορτάσωμεν ταῖς φιλεόρτοις καὶ φιλοθέοις ψυχαῖς. Ἐπεὶ δὲ κεφάλαιον ἑορτῆς μνήμη Θεοῦ, Θεοῦ μνημονεύσωμεν. Καὶ γὰρ τὸν ἐκεῖθεν τῶν ἑορταζόντων ἦχον, ἔνθα εὐφραινομένων πάντων ἡ κατοικία, οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ τοῦτο εἶναι νομίζω, Θεὸν ὑμνούμενόν τε καὶ δοξαζόμενον τοῖς τῆς ἐκεῖσε πολιτείας ἡξιωμένοις.³⁰

26 For the text of *Orations* 38–41, see *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 38–41* ed. Claudio Moreschini and trans. Paul Gallay (Paris, 1990). For the Byzantine reception of Gregory, see now Stratis Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 56–63 with full bibliography. For English translation of these festal orations and an introduction to their liturgical use in Byzantium, see Nonna Verna Harrison, *Festal Orations, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus* (Crestwood, New York, 2008).

27 Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos*, p. 57.

28 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 41.1: Καὶ τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ ἑορτάζειν ἡμῶν, ψυχῇ τι θησαυρίσαι τῶν ἐστῶτων καὶ κρατουμένων [...].

29 See Nonna Verna Harrison, “Gregory of Nazianzus’ Festal Orations: Anamnesis and Mimesis,” *Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 18 (2006), 27–51.

30 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 39.11.

Since we have purified the theatre with our words, come let us now philosophize about the festival, and let us celebrate the festival together with souls that love festivals and love God. And since the main point of the festival is the remembrance of God, let us remember God. For I believe that the sound of those who celebrate in that place where all the Blessed have their home is none other than the hymning and glorification of God by those who have been deemed worthy of that city.

In this and the other festal orations, Gregory's "remembrance of God" consists of an attempt to communicate his vision of the Trinity. Now, Gregory's conception of the "contemplation of the Divine" is thoroughly Platonic,³¹ and as we have seen the Platonic – and, for the history of philosophy, ultimately determinative – scheme of contemplation, *theoria*, is in fact a metaphor drawn from Hellenic festivals themselves. Gregory's move is to reinsert philosophical *theoria* back into the festival context that had given birth to the metaphor in the first place. The move is not an original one. Dio Chrysostom chooses the Olympic Games as a setting for his own meditation on the human capacity to conceive of and depict the divine, a location known of course as a great centre for *theoria* in its sense of "festival pilgrimage."³² His audience consists of *theoroi*, pilgrims who have come to see the great statue of Zeus, and his theme is *theoria*, the contemplation of the divine. By comparing features of Dio's oration to Gregory's we can clearly see the tradition that the latter is building upon in his own festival rhetoric.

In the second half of his oration, Dio imagines an assembly of Greeks questioning the legendary sculptor Pheidias about how he dared to represent Zeus in his famous statue at Olympia. They are made to describe their own attempts to envision the divine:

31 For *theoria* in the Platonic and Patristic traditions, see Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys*, 2nd edition (Oxford, 2007). For *theoria* as the contemplation of spiritual truths in Gregory of Nazianzus, see Jean Plagnieux, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze Théologien* (Paris, 1951), pp. 108–113; Claudio Moreschini, *Filosofia e letteratura in Gregorio di Nazianzo* (Milan, 1997), pp. 100–105. For the "Christian Platonism" of Gregory see especially Moreschini, *Filosofia e letteratura*, pp. 22–69. Jean Daniélou's classic *Platonisme et Théologie Mystique. Essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1944), pp. 127–171 offers a discussion of *theoria* that is also relevant for Gregory of Nazianzus.

32 For text and commentary of *Oration 12*, see Donald Russell (ed.), *Dio Chrysostom: Orations VII, XII and XXXVI* (Cambridge, 1992).

Πρότερον μὲν γάρ, ἅτε οὐδὲν σαφὲς εἰδότες, ἄλλην ἄλλος ἀνεπλάττομεν ἰδέαν, κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν καὶ φύσιν ἕκαστος ἰνδαλλόμενοι καὶ ὀνειρώττοντες [...].³³

Since earlier when we knew nothing clearly, we fashioned different ideas of the divine by forming mental images and dreaming, each according to his ability and nature [...].

In his response Pheidias will eventually have occasion to contrast his own methods of depicting the divine with the less constrained means available to the poets. He describes the fragility of the latter's mental conceptions of the divine:

μιᾷ γὰρ ἐπινοίᾳ καὶ ὀρμῇ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐνεχθεὶς ὁ ποιητὴς πολὺ τι πλῆθος ἐπῶν ἤρυσεν, ὥσπερ ἐκ πηγῆς ὕδατος ὑπερβλύσαντος, πρὶν ἐπιλιπεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ διαρρυῆναι τὸ φάντασμα καὶ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν ἣν ἔλαβε.³⁴

For the poet, caught up by a single thought and impulse of the soul, draws forth a great abundance of words, like water overflowing from a spring, before the image and the thought he conceived escape him and flow away.

When we return to Gregory's Christmas oration, we find a similar discussion of the problematic dynamics involved in contemplating the divine:

οἶόν τι πέλαγος οὐσίας ἀπειρον καὶ ἀόριστον, πᾶσαν ὑπερεκπῖπτον ἔννοιαν, καὶ χρόνου καὶ φύσεως, νῶ μόνῳ σκιαγραφούμενος, καὶ τοῦτο λίαν ἀμυδρῶς καὶ μετρίως, οὐκ ἐκ τῶν κατ'αὐτὸν, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν, ἄλλης ἐξ ἄλλου φαντασίας συλλεγομένης, εἰς ἓν τι τῆς ἀληθείας ἵνδαλμα, πρὶν κρατηθῆναι, φεῦγον, καὶ πρὶν νοηθῆναι, διαδιδράσκον· τοσαῦτα περιλάμπον ἡμῶν τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, καὶ ταῦτα κεκαθαρμένον, ὅσα καὶ ὅψιν ἀστραπῆς τάχος οὐχ ἰσταμένης. (*Or.* 38.7)

like some great sea of being³⁵ without limit or end, surpassing every conception of time and nature, which can be sketched in outline by the mind

33 Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 12.53.

34 Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 12.70.

35 See *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours*, p. 115 (footnote 5), in which Paul Gallay cites a passage from Plato's *Symposium* for the origin of this phrase. See *Platonis opera*, ed. John Burnet,

alone, and even then only very faintly and modestly so, drawn not according to its own attributes, but according to qualities to which it is circumstantially related, as different conceptions are collected from different sources in order to form a certain single mental image of the truth, which flees before it can be fully grasped and escapes without being fully understood. It shines forth upon our rational faculty, even if that should be purified, like a swift lightning bolt, ever in motion, upon our sight.³⁶

Gregory's Christmas audience strain for some *indalma* (ἰνδαλμα) of the truth, while Pheidias' audience describe their attempts to form such mental pictures (ἰνδαλλόμενοι), each according to his own ability. Gregory describes the difficulty in retaining these images of God, which escape like lightning before they are caught and take to flight before they are fully conceived, and we should compare this to how, according to Pheidias, poets must rush to give expression to their inspired conceptions of the divine before they escape them, and flow away like gushing springs of water.

In each case it proves difficult to hold on to these 'images' of the divine, which are both characterized with an elemental rapidity: Dio's liquid *phantasma* and Gregory's lightning-like *indalma*, the latter collected from various *phantasiai*, are ever on the verge of escaping the mind and dissipating.³⁷ Moreover, the two passages share several parallels in both diction and structure. Compare Gregory on the contemplation of God: "as different conceptions are collected from different sources in order to form a certain single mental image of the truth, which flees before it can be fully grasped and escapes without being fully understood" (ἄλλης ἐξ ἄλλου φαντασίας συλλεγομένης, εἰς ἓν τι τῆς ἀληθείας ἰνδαλμα, πρὶν κρατηθῆναι, φεῦγον, καὶ πρὶν νοηθῆναι, διαδιδράσκον);³⁸ with Dio's "Pheidias" on poets and their conceptions of the divine: "before the image and the thought he conceived escape him and flow away" (πρὶν ἐπιλιπεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ

2 vols (Oxford, 1901), 2:210d3–5: ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πέλαγος τετραμμένος τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ θεωρῶν πολλοὺς καὶ καλοὺς λόγους.

36 See *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours*, p. 115 (footnote 3), in which Moreschini notes how Gregory repeats this passage as well as the entirety of *Oration* 38.7–15 in *Oration* 45 "On Easter" at sections 2–9 and 26–27.

37 For Gregory's use of such images in his attempts to depict the divine, his warnings regarding their relative efficacy, as well as his development of what we might call an "epistemology of images", see Edgar Narkevics, "Skiagraphia: Outlining the Conception of God in Gregory's *Theological Orations*," in *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections*, ed. Jostein Børtnes and Thomas Hägg (Copenhagen, 2006), pp. 83–112, at pp. 109–112.

38 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations* 38.7.

διαρρυῆναι τὸ φάντασμα καὶ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν ἣν ἔλαβε).³⁹ Gregory's "πρὶν [...] φεύγον [...] πρὶν [...] διαδιδράσκον" answers to Dio's "πρὶν ἐπιλιπεῖν [...] διαρρυῆναι", even going so far as to echo Dio's pair of synonymous infinitives with a pair of synonymous participles, the second of which, like Dio's διαρρυῆναι ("flow away"), being a compound formed with the *dia*- prefix.

None of this should surprise us. Both Gregory and Dio have learned how to discuss the divine and how to characterize language appropriate to theology from the same tradition of Stoicizing Platonism that served as the philosophical *lingua franca* of the Greco-Roman cultural elite – both Christian and pagan – for generations.⁴⁰ Both draw heavily on classic depictions of *theoria*, such as Diotima's account in Plato's *Symposium* of the soul's ascent to contemplation of the beautiful (210a–212c), the "lightning flash" of a boy's beauty in the *Phaedrus* that makes his lover recall for an instant the form of True Beauty (254b50), and the Allegory of the Cave in *Republic* 7, where the escaped prisoner experiences a progressively more direct encounter with reality, as he gradually acquires the ability to look directly at the sun after acclimating his eyes by looking at reflections of the sun on various surfaces and then other heavenly objects (516a5–b7). For example, in the same Christmas oration (*Or.* 38) Gregory follows Dio by likening the contemplation of the natural order – in which we can see the hand of the creator at work – to the ritual spectatorship involved in the celebration of mystery cults, particularly the Eleusinian mysteries. It is in these passages in particular where we can see Gregory and Dio reinserting the dynamics of contemplative *theoria* back into settings of ritual spectatorship that had informed the metaphor of *theoria* in the first place. During the Christmas oration's Platonically-inflected Christian cosmogony, Gregory describes the creation of man, who is to see evidence of divine providence in the visible world, itself a reflection of a more perfect *kosmos* accessible to the intellect alone: "he placed man upon the earth, a second angel, a worshipper of mixed form, an *observer* of the visible creation, and an *initiate* of the intelligible".⁴¹ Gregory is using the language of ritual

39 Dio Chrysostom, *Orations* 12.70.

40 In modern scholarly accounts of the influence of earlier Christian Platonists on Gregory, Clement and Origen always claim pride of place. See, for example, Christopher Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God* (Oxford, 2008), p. 72 (note 25).

41 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 38.11: τῆς γῆς ἴστησιν, ἄγγελον ἄλλον, προσκυνητὴν μικτὸν, ἐπόπτην τῆς ὁρατῆς κτίσεως, μύστην τῆς νοουμένης. See Grégoire de Nazianze, p. 126, where Moreschini cites other passages in which Gregory uses the term *mystes*. See *Symp.* 209e5–210a2: ταῦτα μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐρωτικά ἴσως, ὧς Σώκρατες, καὶ σὺ μυηθεῖς· τὰ δὲ τέλεα καὶ ἐποπτικά, ὧν ἕνεκα καὶ ταῦτα ἔστιν, εἴαν τις ὀρθῶς μετή, οὐκ οἶδ' εἰ οἶός τ' ἂν εἴης.

spectatorship at the mysteries to characterize mankind's role in contemplating God's creation. Of crucial importance in the development of this kind of discourse was Socrates' account of Diotima's speech in Plato's *Symposium*, in which Diotima instructs Socrates in the contemplation of the Form of the Beautiful as if he were an initiate at the Eleusinian mysteries (*Symp.* 210a1–212a7). Nightingale has demonstrated the place of this text in Plato's "theorisation" of *theoria*, and the metaphor was taken up by Philo and then Clement to describe the contemplation of theological truths arrived at through the exegesis of sacred texts.⁴² It is a metaphor that also presented itself to Dio in his description of the origin of man's innate understanding of the divine:

So it is very much the same as if anyone were to place a man, a Greek or a barbarian, in some mystic shrine of extraordinary beauty and size to be initiated, where he would see many mystic sights and hear many mystic voices, where light and darkness would appear to him alternately, and a thousand other things would occur; and further, if it should be just as in the rite called enthronement, where the inducting priests are wont to seat the novices and then dance round and round them . . . and not suspect that all which was taking place was the result of a more than wise intention and preparation . . . impossible too that the whole human race, which is receiving the complete and truly perfect initiation, not in a little building erected by the Athenians for the reception of a small company, but in this universe, a varied and cunningly wrought creation, in which countless marvels appear at every moment [...].⁴³

42 For Diotima's use of the language of the mysteries to characterise philosophical *theoria*, see Nightingale, *Spectacles of Truth*, pp. 83–86. For the adoption of the metaphor and its development in Philo and Clement, see Christoph Riedweg, *Mysterienterminologie bei Platon, Philon und Klemens von Alexandrien* (Berlin, 1987). On the vocabulary of the mystery religions in Philo and the Christian Fathers see also Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition*, p. 21.

43 I use here the Loeb translation and text. See *Dio Chrysostom Vol. II: Discourses XII–XXX*, trans. James Wilfred Cohoon (Cambridge, Mass., 1939) pp. 33–37: σχεδὸν οὖν ὁμοιον ὥσπερ εἴ τις ἄνδρα, Ἑλληνα ἢ βάρβαρον, μυεῖσθαι παραδοίῃ εἰς μυστικόν τινα οἶκον ὑπερφυῇ κάλλει καὶ μεγέθει, πολλὰ μὲν ὁρῶντα μυστικά θεάματα, πολλῶν δὲ ἀκούοντα τοιούτων φωνῶν, σκότους τε καὶ φωτὸς ἐναλλάξ αὐτῷ φαινομένων, ἄλλων τε μυρίων γιγνομένων, ἔτι δὲ εἰ καθάπερ εἰώθασιν ἐν τῷ καλουμένῳ θρονισμῷ καθίσαντες τοὺς μουμένους οἱ τελοῦντες κύκλῳ περιχορεύειν . . . μὴδ' ὑπονοῆσαι τὰ γιγνόμενα, ὥς μετὰ γνώμης καὶ παρασκευῆς πράττεται σοφωτέρας . . . ἢ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἄνυστόν, κοινῇ δὲ ξύμπαν τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος τὴν ὁλόκληρον καὶ τῷ ὄντι τελείαν τελετὴν μουόμενον, οὐκ ἐν οἰκῇματι μικρῷ παρασκευασθέντι πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν ὄχλου βραχείος ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων, ἀλλὰ ἐν τῷδε τῷ κόσμῳ, ποικίλῳ καὶ σοφῷ δημιουργήματι, μυρίων ἐκάστοτε θαυμαστῶν φαινομένων . . . (*Or.* 12.33–34).

Dio continues for several lines before he finishes his question: is it possible to contemplate the spectacle of the universe without divining something of the gods who made it? As we have observed, it was this very tradition of applying the processes of ritual spectatorship to the contemplation of the divine order and of divine truths that generated the idea of *theoretical* philosophy in the first place.⁴⁴ Now, it is beyond the scope of the present paper to chart exact correspondences between Gregory and Dio on the one hand, and on the other hand various earlier authors – including Plato, Aristotle,⁴⁵ <Longinus>,⁴⁶ Philo, Epictetus,⁴⁷ Clement,⁴⁸ and Origen,⁴⁹ to name just a few – who used the metaphorical fields associated with ritual spectatorship to characterize philosophical contemplation. However, what we can conclude usefully from the foregoing discussion is that the literary elite, both among the readership of rhetorical *progymnasmata* and Gregory's Constantinopolitan audience, would have been trained to recognize the festival as a rhetorical space for the performance of Platonic *theoria*. Gregory's orations on Christmas, Epiphany and Pentecost represent in fact a Christian version of Dio's activity in the *Olympicus*: the performance of *theoria* reinserted into its festival setting. The festivals of the new religious dispensation are treated by the likes of Gregory and company as a venue for performing a familiar, Platonically-inflected *theoria*. This familiarity, then, might have gone some way towards forging a sense of continuity among the rhetorically-trained public during a period when other aspects of what was meant by the word "festival" were in the process of transformation.

44 See also Russell, *Dio Chrysostom*, p. 182, on how behind this passage (*Or.* 12.33–34) there lies a long tradition of comparing the visible *kosmos* to a place of initiation to the mysteries: "The analogy between the kosmos and a place of initiation into mysteries is widely used, but D's elaboration of it owes much to his own vivid setting. It probably goes back to Aristotle's picture of the wonder felt by men who dwelt long underground on suddenly seeing the upper world [...] but it was particularly popular with the Stoics..."

45 In the *Protrepticus*, as reconstructed from Iamblichus, Aristotle compares philosophical *theoria* to spectatorship at the Olympic Games and the City Dionysia; see Aristotle, *Protrepticus*, ed. Ingemar Düring (Stockholm, 1961) fr. B44. See also Nightingale, *Spectacles of Truth*, pp. 18, 187–252.

46 See Nightingale, *Spectacles of Truth*, pp. 265–266, citing Longinus, *On the Sublime*, ed. Donald Russell (Oxford, 1964), 35.2–5.

47 See Rutherford, *State Pilgrims*, p. 326 (footnote 11), citing Epictetus, *Dissertationes ab Arriano digestae*, ed. Heinrich Schenkl (Leipzig, 1916) 2.14.23–24.

48 For Philo and Clement, see Riedweg, *Mysterienterminologie*.

49 See Dragos A. Giulea, "Seeing Christ Through Scriptures at the Paschal Celebration: Exegesis as Mystery Performance in the Paschal Writings of Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 74/1 (2008), 27–47.

Constantinople and the Desert City: Imperial Patronage of the Judaean Desert Monasteries, 451–565

Daniel Neary

Introduction

In Late Antiquity, Palestine's Judaean Desert became one of the great centres of eastern Christian asceticism. This was a process which saw a remote region on the periphery of the Roman world transformed through the construction of dozens of monasteries and hermitages. In the early-fifth century, these institutions were modest in scale and few in number. However, by the reign of the emperor Justinian, Judaean Desert monasticism had grown to become a wealthy and powerful movement, dominating the local landscape and influencing the religious politics of the wider Empire. Modern scholarship's understanding of the economic processes and relationships which lay behind this growth, however, remains limited.

This paper will consider the potential role played by imperial patrons in the history of Judaean Desert monasticism during the fifth and sixth centuries. It will suggest that local monastic development was initially driven by shifting patterns of religious patronage in Palestine, instigated at Constantinople, following the Council of Chalcedon. Competition between monastic patrons in the later fifth century greatly enhanced the standing of the Desert monks, whilst also binding them to the structures of the Jerusalem episcopate. This paper will suggest that the efforts of rival, Gazan monasteries to gain favour with the emperor Anastasius (491–518) subsequently threatened this arrangement, whilst also alerting the Desert monks to the material advantages to be derived from imperial support. It will tentatively argue that, by reign of Justinian, imperial patronage had assumed an important role in the region's monastic economy.

The Judaean Desert

The Judaean Desert is a compact region which once formed the eastern extremity of the Roman province of Palaestina Prima, and is now mostly con-

tained within the Occupied West Bank. It is roughly twenty to twenty-five kilometres in diameter, and approximately 90 km from north to south, bordered by Jerusalem and the Judaeian Hills to the west, and the Dead Sea to the East. Apart from the Jericho Plain to the northeast, considered to form part of the region in Late Antiquity, it is dominated by an arid desert plateau which descends eastwards toward the sea, traversed by wadis and deep ravines. The Desert's limited size meant that the monasteries built there lay on the periphery of the settled area which surrounded Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Jericho. A system of informal roads, some dating to the Hasmonaean period, allowed the majority of monks to reach Jerusalem in less than a day.¹ This proximity was a defining feature of local monasticism. It enabled the Desert's monastic communities to participate in, and to later determine, the city's ecclesiastical politics. However, the region's northern fringe was also served by the Roman road which led from Jerusalem to Jericho, the primary route for pilgrims traveling to the Jordan River.²

Modern archaeological surveys of the Desert were first conducted in the second half of the nineteenth century. Early Swiss, French, and German expeditions were followed by a comprehensive British survey commissioned by the Palestine Exploration Fund, and overseen by Claude Conder and Herbert (later Lord) Kitchener in the 1870s and 1880s. Its findings, published as *The Survey of Western Palestine*, provided a definitive map of the region's archaeological remains before the work of Israeli archaeologists in recent decades.³ Resurgent interest in the Desert's monastic sites, beginning in the 1970s, has since built upon early excavations conducted by Michael Avi-Yonah and Derwas Chitty during the period of the British Mandate. Work led by Yizhar Hirschfeld, Joseph Patrich, Leah Di Segni, and Virgilio Corbo, among others, has unearthed many further Late Antique monasteries and systematically analysed their remains. Their findings have since been included in maps produced for the Israeli Antiquities Authority's *Archaeological Survey of Israel* project, and in the maps and gazetteer of the authoritative *Tabula Imperii Romani Iudaea-Palaestina* volume, published in 1994.⁴

Much of the work conducted on Judaeian Desert monasticism in recent decades has sought to analyse archaeological remains alongside the literary

1 Yizhar Hirschfeld, *The Judean Desert Monasteries of the Byzantine Period*, (New Haven, C.T., 1992), p. 206.

2 Robert Beuvery, "La Route Romaine de Jerusalem a Jericho," *Revue biblique* 66 (1957), 72–101.

3 Claude R. Conder and Horatio H. Kitchener, *The Survey of Western Palestine*, 3 vols, vol. 2: *Samaria* (London, 1882), vol. 3: *Judea* (London, 1883).

4 Yoram Tsafrir, Leah Di Segni, and Judith Green, *Tabula imperii romani: Iudaea-Palaestina, Eretz-Israel in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Jerusalem, 1994).

accounts of local hagiographies, as a means of enhancing our understanding of the movement's scale and material culture. In part, this has been encouraged by the relative size and quality of the surviving corpus of saints' *Lives* written by local monks. These texts, however, are also valuable historical sources in their own right, able to provide information on the Desert's monasteries which, by its nature, has not survived in their physical remains.

Foremost among the hagiographers active in the region during the fifth and sixth centuries was Cyril of Scythopolis. Born the son of an episcopal official in ca. 525, Cyril was the author of the *Lives* of seven local ascetics, claiming to cover events from the arrival of St. Euthymius in Palestine in 405/406, to the death of Ioannes the Hesychast in 558/559. His earliest and most substantial works, the *Lives* of Euthymius and Sabas, appear to have been completed in the early 550s.⁵ They were followed by five further hagiographies of monks associated with Euthymius and Sabas: Ioannes the Hesychast, Theodosius the Coenobiarch, Cyriacus, Theognius, and Abraamius, bishop of Cratea.

However, though prolific, Cyril is not our only monastic guide to events in the Judaean Desert in this period. Among his contemporaries was Theodorus of Petra, author of a rival *Life of Theodosius the Coenobiarch*.⁶ Theodorus' lengthy, rhetorical work has traditionally provoked negative comparisons with Cyril', whose *Life* includes several details of Theodosius' career which Theodorus omits. A clear bias against the claims of Sabas and his followers is also prevalent throughout the text. However, these troubling aspects of Theodorus' work are also valuable to the historian. At the very least, they reveal something of the tensions which existed between Desert monks in the sixth century, and give grounds to question Cyril' version of events. Whilst Theodosius died in 529, it is unclear exactly when Theodorus completed his *Life*. It must, however, predate Cyril' hagiography, which references it.

Aside from Cyril and Theodorus, further Desert hagiographies were composed by Paulus of Elusa, and the anonymous authors of the *Lives* of Gerasimus and Chariton. Paulus, a sixth-century bishop of Elusa in Palaestina Tertia, was the author of a second encomium of Theognius also cited by Cyril.⁷ The *Life of Gerasimus*, which was formerly attributed to Cyril, is a short work of limited importance to this study. However, the third text, the *Life of Chariton*, is of

5 Bernard Flusin, *Miracle et histoire dans l'oeuvre de Cyrille de Scythopolis* (Paris, 1984), pp. 33–34.

6 Hermann Usener, *Der Heilige Theodosios, Schriften des Theodorus und Kyrillos* (Leipzig, 1890), pp. 3–101.

7 Joseph Van den Gheyn, "Acta Sancti Theognii," *Analecta Bollandiana* 10 (1891), 73–113; trans. in English Tim Vivian, *Journeying into God: Seven Early Monastic Lives* (Minneapolis, 1996), pp. 145–165.

some interest. Gérard Garitte discovered an earlier form of this *Life* than that preserved by Symeon Metaphrastes in two Vatican manuscripts in the 1930s.⁸ Dating it to the sixth century, Garitte believed that the monks of Chariton had commissioned the *Life* so as to better compete with the Sabaite monasteries celebrated by Cyril.

When taken together, the literary and archaeological evidence allows us to draw a broad outline of the early history of Judaeian Desert monasticism. It would seem that monastic life was first introduced to the region by Chariton, a hermit from Iconium, who established an ascetic community in caves surrounding the spring of 'Ein Fara, northwest of Jerusalem, in the first half of the fourth century. The *laura* of Pharan, as it became known, was then succeeded by two others, at Douka and Souka. The latter, as is clear from Cyril's *Lives*, was already known as 'the Old Laura' by local monks in the sixth century. The account of the *Life of Chariton*, however, should be approached with caution when considering these events. A study by Hirschfeld concluded that the text's topographical account of Chariton's monasteries was broadly accurate.⁹ However, its editors have observed that sections which discuss persecution by the emperor Aurelianus (270–275) appear to be set at an implausibly early date, given the *Life's* subsequent claim that the monasteries were consecrated by Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem from 312 to c.335.

According to Cyril, three further ascetic communities were established in the Desert during the early-fifth century by Euthymius, a monk from Melitene. The *Life of Euthymius* records that the first was a *coenobium* founded in ca. 411 in a ravine of the Wadi Muqallik with funds from Maris, brother of the local Arab chieftain Petrus-Aspebetus.¹⁰ Two further monasteries, one a *coenobium* at Caparbaricha (identified as Khirbet Umm Rukhba), and the other a *laura* at Khan al-Ahmar, near Mishor Adummim, are claimed to have been built in the 420s. Khan al-Ahmar was then converted into a *coenobium* following Euthymius' death in 473.

The major expansion of Judaeian Desert monasticism, therefore, did not occur until the second half of the fifth century. It was seemingly in this period

8 Gérard Garitte, "La Vie prémétaphrastique de S. Chariton," *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 21 (1940–1941), 1–50; trans. in English Leah Di Segni, "The Life of Chariton," in *Ascetic Behaviour in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, ed. Vincent Wimbush (Minneapolis, 1990), pp. 393–424.

9 Yizhar Hirschfeld, "The Life of Chariton in Light of Archaeological Research," in *Ascetic Behaviour*, pp. 425–447.

10 Haim Goldfus, Benjamin Arubas, and Eugenio Alliata, "The Monastery of St. Theoctistus (Deir Muqallik)," *Liber Annuus* 45 (1995), 247–292.

that the region became the site of frenetic monastic building activity, with the appearance of the famous foundations of Gerasimus, Martyrius, Sabas, and Theodosius the Coenobiarch. The dating of these foundations may be established with differing degrees of certainty. It would seem clear that the vast monastery of Martyrius at Ma'ale Adummim was established during its namesake's tenure as bishop of Jerusalem (478–486), whilst Cyril of Scythopolis provides dates for the establishment of the monastery of Theodosius (located at present-day Deir Dosi) in 479 and the 'Great Laura' of Sabas in 483. We cannot, of course, accept the latter dates with any certainty. However, they are likely to have been broadly accurate. Both Cyril and Theodorus of Petra state that Sabas and Theodosius were later appointed as archimandrites of the Desert monks, with Cyril claiming that this occurred in 493 on the orders of the bishop Sallustius. If this were the case, then we must assume that both men had already risen to prominence, and that their monasteries had been active for a number of years beforehand. It is, moreover, difficult to believe that Cyril could have plausibly invented this detail only sixty years later. Sabas, in particular, was a prolific figure in the local monastic movement, establishing a 'Sabaite' federation of seven further *laurae* and *coenobia* which, by the seventh century, had sister monasteries in Rome and North Africa.

By the reign of the emperor Justinian (527–565), the Judaeian Desert had become a relatively crowded monastic landscape. In 1990, Yizhar Hirschfeld published a revised map of ascetic sites in the region, identifying the remains of seventy-three monasteries and hermitages, the vast majority operating in the Justinianic period.¹¹ This figure did not include a further nine 'ghost monasteries' mentioned in literary sources, but whose remains have not yet been located. It should be stressed that many of Hirschfeld's sites were small foundations, unlikely to have housed more than twenty monks, and that a number of monasteries discovered appeared to date to the late-sixth or seventh centuries. This, however, is not enough to dispute the clear picture of expansion evident in the Desert during the later fifth century.

Patronage and Monastic Economy

As has been remarked, relatively little scholarly attention has been devoted to the economic means by which this expansion was achieved. Studies which

11 Yizhar Hirschfeld, "List of the Byzantine Monasteries in the Judean Desert," in *Christian Archaeology in the Holy Land, New Discoveries: Essays in Honour of Virgilio C. Corbo*, ed. Giovanni Bottini, Leah Di Segni, and Eugenio Alliata (Jerusalem, 1990), pp. 1–90.

discuss the Desert's monastic economy have tended to concentrate on the means by which monasteries maintained their assets, and supported the livelihoods of their monks; thus they often leave aside the problem of the large funds usually required for the initial establishment of monasteries, or the subsequent purchase of further properties.

It is clear that the sources of local monastic income were often varied. The Desert's monastic economy is likely to have had a diverse base, which included relationships of patronage, landownership, the production of goods, and the provision of services. The role of local monasteries as centres of agricultural production has been affirmed by Virgilio Corbo's excavations at the 'Shepherd's Field' outside Bethlehem, in Hirschfeld's work at Khan al-Ahmar, and in excavations conducted at the monastery of Martyrius.¹² In each case, intensive farming by monks was in evidence. It is also clear that donations made by pilgrims accounted for a significant proportion of some monasteries' incomes. The remains of the monastery of Martyrius include an impressive complex of hostels and stables. In the *Life of Euthymius*, Cyril of Scythopolis describes how Khan al-Ahmar's treasury was filled with visitors' small offerings. Elsewhere, he mentions the visit of four hundred Armenian pilgrims to the monastery in a single day.¹³ It would seem that pilgrimage's role remained undiminished in the centuries that followed. The seventh-century *Life of Georgius of Choziba*, also written in the Desert, claims that its importance to his monastery was such that wealthy visitors received the personal attention of the abbot.¹⁴

However, such activities are unlikely to have been viable for many of the monasteries of the Desert plateau. The arid conditions prevalent there prevented large-scale agricultural production. Joseph Patrich, in his study of the Sabaite monasteries, was forced to conclude that they were dependent upon food dispatched from elsewhere.¹⁵ Moreover, the vast majority of pilgrims following the road between Jerusalem and Jericho would surely have been much more likely to visit the competing communities of ascetics established along the route. Hirschfeld identified a series of private "memorial churches" built

12 Virgilio Corbo, *Gli scavi di Kkh. Siyar el-Ghanam (Campo dei pastori) e i monasteri dei dintorni* (Jerusalem, 1995), pp. 254–255.

13 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Euthymii*, ed. Eduard Schwartz (Leipzig, 1939), 17, 50, pp. 27–28, 72–74; Michael Stone, "Holy Land Pilgrimage of Armenians Before the Arab Conquests," *Revue Biblique* 93 (1986), 93–110.

14 Anthonios of Choziba, *Vita Sancti Georgii Chozibitae* ed. Tim Vivian (Minneapolis, M.N. 1996), 12, 16, pp. 78, 83.

15 Joseph Patrich, *Sabas, Leader of Palestinian Monasticism* (Washington D.C. 1995), pp. 194–195.

alongside the road, which he considered to have been deliberately sited to exploit this passing trade.¹⁶

For these reasons, it is difficult to imagine that all of the plateau monasteries were able to derive an income from pilgrimage that was sufficient to fund all of their activities. And whilst smaller ascetic groups could have survived with very few resources, communities such as the ‘Great Laura’ of Sabas housed several hundred monks in impressive buildings, and frequently also operated guesthouses and hospices in Jerusalem and Jericho.¹⁷ Beat Brenk has argued that large monasteries of this kind, with more than one hundred monks, depended upon large donations of land and wealth for their survival.¹⁸ Elsewhere, Theodorus of Petra spoke of four hundred monks living in the *coenobium* of Theodosius.¹⁹ Such large institutions, with significant social responsibilities, would have surely sought the support of wealthy patrons in a period where, as many have observed, there occurred a vast transfer of private wealth into the hands of religious institutions.²⁰

This suggestion would seem to fit with a broader literature arguing that the religious economy of Late Antique Palestine was built upon an influx of funds from outside the province. Michael Avi-Yonah, in his classic article on ‘The Economics of Byzantine Palestine’, suggested that wider economic growth in the region was fuelled by the investment of substantial external wealth into churches and monasteries, encouraged by the imperial court following the conversion of Constantine.²¹ Though Avi-Yonah’s original thesis has since provoked some justified criticism, its basic contention that Palestine’s prosperity in the fifth and sixth centuries was tied its designation as the ‘holy land’ of the Roman Church is broadly accepted.²² Whilst some objections have been

16 Hirschfeld, *Judean Desert Monasteries*, pp. 56, 102–111.

17 Cyril, *Vita Sabae*, ed. Eduard Schwartz (Leipzig, 1939), 31, p. 116; idem, *Vita Cyriacii*, ed. Eduard Schwartz (Leipzig, 1939), 6, p. 226.

18 Beat Brenk, “Monasteries as Rural Settlements: Patron-Dependence or Self-sufficiency?” in *Recent Research of the Late Antique Countryside*, ed. Luke Lavan and William Bowden (Leiden, 2004), pp. 447–476.

19 Theodorus of Petra, *Vita Theodosii*, ed. Karl H. Usener (Leipzig, 1890), pp. 126–127.

20 Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350–550 AD* (Princeton, New Jersey, 2012), *passim*.

21 Michael Avi-Yonah, “The Economics of Byzantine Palestine,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 8 (1958), 39–51.

22 Edward D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312–460* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 218–248; Alan Walmsley, “Byzantine Palestine and Arabia: Urban Prosperity in Late Antiquity,” in *Towns in Transition, Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Neil Christie and Simon Loseby (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 122–123, 147.

raised over the extent to which this surge of religious patronage determined wider economic conditions, it can at least be expected to have affected monasteries as religious institutions.

The modest character of the Judaeian Desert monasteries of the early fifth century has already been mentioned above. It is clear, however, that during the same period, a strong tradition of monastic patronage by members of the senatorial aristocracy had developed in Jerusalem and its surroundings.²³ We know that imperial patronage of the Church in Jerusalem began under Constantine, with the visit of the empress Helena to the city in 326–328. Its clearest expression, as related by Eusebius, was the construction of the landmark churches of the Anastasis, the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Ascension on the Mount of Olives, and the basilica at Mamre. These imperial donations, however, were quickly followed by the construction and endowment of monasteries by wealthy private individuals, who had often initially come to the region as pilgrims.

The monasteries of the Roman aristocrat Melania on the Mount of Olives, or that built for Jerome by Paula in Bethlehem, provided a model for numerous similar foundations in the region. Melania's granddaughter, Melania the Younger, fleeing to Palestine with her husband Pinianus following the Visigothic sack of Rome, subsequently gave much of her vast fortune to local monastic enterprises. Her *Life*, written by the monk Gerontius in the 450s, provides a description of aristocratic largesse which may be prone to exaggeration, but her status as a leading local patron of ascetics is not in doubt. This phenomenon arguably reached its zenith during the permanent residence of the empress Eudocia in Palestine from 441/442–460. The scale of her subsequent patronage of churches and monasteries in the region was clearly remarkable, and is extensively attested in the Late Antique authors. Though an Augusta, Eudocia's isolation from the imperial court at Constantinople enabled her to dispense her personal fortune in a manner similar to other aristocrats.

Such patronage, however, is noticeably absent in the Judaeian Desert during the same period. Many of its most prominent monasteries had not yet been founded, but those which did exist were comparatively small and simple communities. Excavations have suggested that the Old Laura of Chariton at Souka was largely developed at a later date, whilst Petrus-Aspebetus, whose family appear to have been the principal patrons of the monks of Euthymius, was not a member of the traditional Roman elite. It would seem clear that

23 Konstantin Klein, "Do thy Good Pleasure unto Zion: The Patronage of Aelia Eudokia in Jerusalem," in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Lioba Theis, Margaret Mullett, and Michael Grünbart (Köln, 2014), pp. 89–95; *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 60/61, 2011/2012, (Köln 2014), 85–96.

the Euthymian monasteries did enjoy some links with powerful private and institutional figures in the early-fifth century. For example, Cyril records that the bishop Iuvenalus came to consecrate Khan al-Ahmar's chapel in 428, whilst Euthymius' disciple Domnus, later bishop of Antioch, is claimed to have retired there following the Second Council of Ephesus.²⁴ However, the *Life of Euthymius* also states that the holy man's second monastery, built at Caparbaricha, was constructed by local villagers. There is no evidence of any significant private or institutional patronage of the Euthymians, except that of Petrus-Aspebetus, until the 450s. It would thus seem that the mid-fifth century marks a watershed moment in the history of Judaeen Desert monasticism, after which the region's monks became popular recipients of gifts of land and wealth. This development may well be linked to the rulings of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, held at Chalcedon in 451.

The Rise of Judaeen Desert Monasticism

The canons of Chalcedon contained specific provisions aimed at curbing the influence of private monastic foundations throughout the empire, as a means of strengthening episcopal authority over monks. In addition to extending the authority of bishops over monasteries and private religious institutions, they also restricted priests and monks from seeking alternative sources of income. Forbidden to engage in secular business without approval, they were also barred from leasing property, or holding public office.²⁵

Whilst it would be unreasonable to claim that these canons represented a uniform policy, enforced across the Roman Empire, it is at least clear that their influence was felt in Palestine. The acceptance of Chalcedon by Iuvenalus, the bishop of Jerusalem, had led many local monasteries to participate in a rebellion against his rule from 451–453, together with their wealthy patrons. Their supporters included Eudocia, the monks of Melania the Younger's monastery on the Mount of Olives, and monasteries led by the abbots Romanus, Gerasimus, and Elpidius. Imperial troops were dispatched to restore order in 453, with later anti-Chalcedonian sources describing a resulting massacre outside the city of Neapolis. The apparent outcome of this violence was an uneasy stalemate between the episcopate and a bruised party of former rebels still active within the Palestinian Church. Thus, rather than putting an end to the tradition of aristocratic monastic patronage in Jerusalem, Chalcedon and its

24 Cyril, *Vita Euthymii*, 20, p. 32.

25 *Canons* 3, 4, 7, 8, ed. Richard Price and Michael Gaddis (Liverpool, 2003), 3, pp. 94–97.

aftermath may have entrenched competition between private patrons and the city's bishops for influence over the local monastic movement.

The survival of aristocratic patronage is well-attested in the hagiographies. The short *Life of Theognius*, written by Cyril of Scythopolis, contains a reference to Flavia, a wealthy patroness who was constructing a monastery on the Mount of Olives, and a church of St. Julian, in "the fifth year of the reign of Marcianus", or 456/457.²⁶ Cyril records that Flavia appointed Theognius as administrator of her monastery, before returning to her homeland, where she had also built churches. Elsewhere, the *Life of Theodosius* records that, in the same period immediately after Chalcedon, Hicelia, the wife of the local governor, was engaged in the construction of the church and monastery of the Kathisma just outside Jerusalem.²⁷ It must also be noted that Eudocia embarked on a final programme of church and monastery construction in the years before her death in 460. Among the empress' foundations of this period were the landmark church of St. Stephen overlooking Jerusalem, and a monastery-church of St. Peter, built in close proximity to Euthymius' *laura* at Khan al-Ahmar.²⁸

The continued prominence of private religious foundations of this kind posed a challenge to the authority of Iuvenalus and his successors in Jerusalem. Their response would appear to have been a gradual attempt to establish a network of loyal monks, based in monasteries in the neighbouring Desert. This included the foundation of new ascetic communities, as by Martyrius at Ma'ale Adummim, and the double-monastery of the bishop Elias on the Jericho Plain. According to Cyril of Scythopolis, Iuvenalus had also dispatched Gerasimus to establish a further monastery loyal to the episcopate near to the Jordan.²⁹ However, the bishops' efforts to cement monastic support also appear to have included the offer of patronage to existing communities. The Euthymian monastery at Khan al-Ahmar would appear to be a case in point. Cyril claims that Euthymius was one of the few Palestinian ascetics to oppose the rebellion against the episcopate in 451–453, although it is apparent even from this account that he was not involved in any active campaign against it. It is possible that this could have encouraged episcopal support for his monastery in the period which followed, although it is likely that Khan al-Ahmar's strategic position on the Jerusalem-Jericho road also had a bearing.

26 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Theognii*, ed. Eduard Schwartz (Leipzig, 1939), pp. 241–242.

27 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Theodosii*, ed. Eduard Schwartz (Leipzig, 1939) 1, p. 236; Theodorus of Petra, *Vita Theodosii*, 7, p. 13.

28 Yizhar Hirschfeld, "A Church and Reservoir Built by Empress Eudocia," *Liber Annuus* 40 (1990), 287–294.

29 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Euthymii*, 27, p. 44.

Cyril relates that Martyrius paid for the reconstruction of the monastery of Euthymius after 473. Workmen and an engineer commissioned by the bishop built Euthymius' funeral chapel under the direction of the deacon, Fidus.³⁰ However, it is also clear that the episcopate was the latest of several patrons courting the Euthymian monks in the period after 451. The family of Petrus-Aspebetus, who had been appointed as *phylarchs* responsible for the defence of the region against Arab incursions, appear to have continued in their role as primary patrons of the monastery for much of the period. Petrus' son Terebon, for example, is recorded to have left a substantial bequest to Khan al-Ahmar and the nearby Euthymian monastery of Theoctistus on his death in 485.³¹ Their authority as patrons would appear to have come under threat, however, in the 450s when Eudocia approached Euthymius and subsequently financed the construction of the church and monastery of St. Peter, built on the Jerusalem-Jericho road and overlooking Khan al-Ahmar. The episcopate's involvement in the affairs of the same monastery, then, would seem to represent an attempt to compete against private patrons for the affections of its monks, and thus to incorporate it within a monastic network loyal to Jerusalem.

Similar episcopal patronage of the Desert monks in the 480s-510s is evident in Cyril's *Life of Sabas*. As we have seen, the bishop Sallustius appointed Sabas and Theodosius the Coenobiarch as archimandrites of Palestine's monks in 493. His successor Elias, a former monk of Euthymius, then assisted in the rapid expansion of the Sabaite order. Cyril records that Elias immediately stepped in to defend Sabas, when rebellious monks attempted to overthrow him. He dispatched further funds to Sabas for the reconstruction of the rebels' 'New Laura,' once he had brought it under his control.³² In 510, the *Life of Sabas* also mentions that Elias sent labourers to demolish the Laura of Heptastomos, established by one of the holy man's followers without his permission.³³ Sabas was subsequently sent to head a delegation dispatched by Elias to Constantinople in 511-512 to negotiate with the emperor Anastasius, following the bishop's refusal to recognise the legitimacy of Severus of Antioch.³⁴

As we might expect, such overtures allowed the Desert monasteries to exert a growing influence over the episcopate and its policies. As links between the two developed, monks were often appointed to important positions within the local Church. We have observed that both Martyrius and Elias were former

30 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Euthymii*, 43, p. 63.

31 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Cyriacii*, 6-7, p. 226.

32 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Sabae* 36, pp. 123-124.

33 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Sabae* 39, p. 130.

34 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Sabae* 50, pp. 139-141.

disciples of Euthymius. However, Theognius, Theodorus of Petra, and Paulus of Elusa are all further examples of Desert monks appointed to administer Jerusalem's suffragan sees. Moreover, Marcianus, Theodosius and Sabas' predecessor as archimandrite, had also been the abbot of a Desert monastery.

However, this arrangement, brokered in the apparent absence of imperial patronage for the Judaeian Desert monasteries, was suddenly challenged by its appearance elsewhere in Palestine. Following disturbances in Gaza, instigated by the renegade monk Nephalius in 508, the abbot Severus had travelled to Constantinople to petition the emperor Anastasius for relief. He then remained at the court for a period of three years, becoming a trusted advisor to the emperor. Having gained Anastasius' support, Severus was subsequently elected as bishop of Antioch. In the same years, another Gazan monk, John Rufus, composed his anti-Chalcedonian polemical works, the *Life of Peter the Iberian* and the *Plerophoriae*, which were sharply critical of the religious establishment in Jerusalem.³⁵ That this Gazan party had secured the patronage of the emperor was clear by 516, when the bishop Elias of Jerusalem was deposed by imperial troops over his dispute with Severus. They very nearly succeeded in forcing his successor, Ioannes III, to accept their views.³⁶ This episode must have illustrated the advantages of imperial patronage very clearly to the Desert monks. In the decades which followed, they produced hagiographies of their own, seemingly written with an official audience in mind.

Imperial Patronage under Justinian

Following Anastasius I's death in 518, his successors, Justin I and Justinian I, enacted policies in support of the Council of Chalcedon. Indeed, one of Justin's first acts was the deposition of Severus. It would seem that the Desert monks sought to benefit from this changed imperial stance, employing hagiographies as a means by which to assert their loyalty to the 'neo-Chalcedonian' agenda promoted by the court for much of the period up to 565. Historians have observed this trait in the *Lives* of Cyril of Scythopolis. Bernard Flusin was able to demonstrate that Cyril based his account of the doctrine of his order's

35 John Rufus, *Vita Petri Iberici*, ed. Richard Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer, ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen und Sittengeschichte des 5. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1895); idem, *Plerophoriae*, ed. Francois Nau, "Jean Rufus, évêque de Maiouma. Plérôphories," in *Patrologia Orientalis* 8 (Paris 1912), pp. 11–183.

36 Cyril, *Vita Sabae* 56, pp. 148–152.

founders upon Justinian's theological writings.³⁷ There is also reason to believe that the *Lives*' image of monastic orthopraxy was influenced by the emperor's monastic legislation.³⁸ However, recent research has also suggested that Cyril's determination to secure imperial favour led him to deliberately misrepresent the views of rival ascetic claimants.

Beginning in the 530s and ending with the Council of Constantinople in 553, the Sabaites were involved in a bitter dispute with a local group of 'Origenist' monks, which found its way to the imperial court. This latter group had earlier emerged as a faction within the Sabaite confederacy opposed to Sabas' rule and attempted to take control of his monasteries once again, following his death in 532.³⁹ In the decades which followed, both parties took their case to Justinian. Through the efforts of Leontius of Byzantium, the Origenists' spokesman at court, two of their party, Theodorus Ascidas and Domitianus, were appointed as bishops of important sees. In 552, their candidate Eustochius was then elected as bishop of Jerusalem. However, Cyril records that aggressive lobbying by the Sabaites eventually encouraged the emperor to issue an edict against Origenism in 543, and then to call for its condemnation at the Council of 553. The 'Origenists' fell permanently from imperial favour as a result.

Modern understanding of this controversy depends heavily upon Cyril's account. However, work by Brian Daley and Daniël Hombergen has suggested that much of it may be misleading. In 1976, Daley analysed the theological works attributed to the would-be leaders of the 'Origenist' party, but was unable to discern any clear trace of the heterodoxy attributed to them.⁴⁰ Hombergen has since argued that Cyril, in the *Life of Cyriacus*, retrospectively imposed 'Origenist' beliefs upon them, using language based upon the rulings of the Council of 553.⁴¹ Indeed, the influence of imperial religious policy may be seen throughout the text. It would seem that Cyril, to advance the Sabaites' claim as potential clients of Justinian, exaggerated the views of their opponents, whilst painting his own side's position as one of unflinching loyalty to the emperor.

37 Flusin, *Miracle et Histoire*, pp. 76–77.

38 Philip Booth, *Crisis of Empire: Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity, Transformation of the Classical Heritage* (Berkeley, 2013), pp. 16–17 (footnote 42).

39 Cyril, *Vita Sabae* 83–84, pp. 188–190.

40 Brian Daley, "The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium," *Journal of Theological Studies* 27 (1976), 333–369, at 366.

41 Daniël Hombergen, *The Second Origenist Controversy: A New Perspective on Cyril of Scythopolis' Monastic Biographies as Historical Sources for Sixth-Century Origenism* (Rome, 2001), pp. 270–285.

However, it is likely that Cyril was only one of a number of writers pursuing the same agenda. Theodorus of Petra's *Life of Theodosius* denies Sabas a role in the local Chalcedonian resistance to the religious policies of Anastasius. For his part, Cyril paints Theodorus' hero, Theodosius, as Sabas' deputy in a struggle against the emperor. We cannot ultimately determine if either version of events ought to be believed, but it would seem clear that both hagiographers sought to appeal to the doctrinal sympathies of Anastasius' successors, at the expense of their monastic rivals.

Indeed, it is during Anastasius' reign that imperial patronage of Palestinian monasteries is first evident. In addition to the Gazan monasteries mentioned above, he is credited with numerous further foundations in Arabia and northern Syria.⁴² Elsewhere in Palestine, he was remembered as the donor of a substantial monastery of John the Baptist, sited on the banks of the Jordan and described by the sixth-century pilgrim Theodosius, whose account records that its monks received an annual stipend of six solidi from the imperial treasury.⁴³ Leah Di Segni, on the basis of the local epigraphic record, has identified Anastasius' reign as the beginning of an apogee of church and monastery construction in Palestine, culminating under Justinian.⁴⁴

The hagiographers give colourful accounts of attempts by Anastasius to act as patron to the Judaeen Desert monks during the 510s. As noted above, Cyril of Scythopolis describes a visit paid by Sabas to Constantinople in 511/512 on behalf of the bishop Elias. The *Life of Sabas* claims that the emperor, impressed by the holy man's ascetic zeal, gave him 2000 solidi for use in his monasteries.⁴⁵ Elsewhere, Theodorus of Petra claims that Anastasius offered Theodosius the Coenobiarch 'thirty pounds' of gold, having already bribed many bishops into compliance with his policies.⁴⁶ His *Life* significantly notes that, though Theodosius accepted the money, he used it for the relief of the poor. A similar story also appears in Paulus of Elusa's work, where the bishop Theognius is claimed to have secured funds from Anastasius for his parishioners.⁴⁷ Whether or not these accounts describe real events, they are surely evidence at least of the central place which imperial patronage had assumed in the imagination

42 Andrew Palmer, *Monk and Mason on the Tigris Frontier* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 52, 123.

43 Theodosius, *De Situ Terrae Sanctae* ed. Paul Geyer (Vienna 1852), 20, pp. 24–27.

44 Leah Di Segni, "Epigraphic Documentation of Building in the Provinces of Palaestina and Arabia, 4th–7th c.," in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East: Some Recent Archaeological Research*, ed. John Humphrey, 2nd vol. (Portsmouth, RI, 2002), pp. 149–178.

45 Cyril, *Vita Sabae* 51, 54, and pp. 142–143, 145–147 respectively.

46 Theodorus of Petra, *Vita Theodosii* pp. 132–133.

47 Paulus of Elusa, *Vita Theognii*, ed. Tim Vivian (Minneapolis, M.N., 1996), 11. pp. 152–153.

of the Desert monks during the sixth century. It may also be argued that they represent a further, thinly-veiled attempt to solicit patronage from the court of Justinian.

In Cyril's work, Anastasius' donations appear designed to contrast with later, more substantial imperial largesse said to have followed Sabas' second trip to Constantinople in 531/532. Among many other gifts, the *Life of Sabas* records that the holy man received a further 1000 solidi from Justinian to build forts to protect his monasteries against incursion by the Arabs. In both episodes, there is an implication that such patronage was a duty of imperial office, regardless of the views of its occupant. This would seem clear in a passage of the *Life* where Justinian and his courtiers are shown deciding upon the amount of money to be given to the Palestinian Church following the Samaritan Revolt of 529. Asked by a disciple why he is not intervening in this discussion, Sabas urges him to one side with the words, "they are doing their work, child, let us do ours!"⁴⁸ Both this account, and those of Theodorus and Paulus, seemingly betray their authors' expectation that the orthodox emperors would offer a programme of monastic donations to rival or exceed those of their heterodox predecessor.

It remains to be seen how far these shifting expectations reflected a real increase in imperial monastic patronage during the mid-sixth century, and not merely the wishful thinking of the Palestinian hagiographers. However, there would seem to be sufficient evidence in the local archaeological record to suggest that some Desert monasteries gained access to new and significant sources of income in the broad period surrounding the reign of Justinian. The monastery of Martyrius at Ma'ale Adummim, founded in the late-fifth century, appears to have been lavishly reconstructed in these years. Its remains, excavated in the 1980s, were found to include an impressive stuccoed refectory supported by fine marble columns and, unusually, a private bathhouse. Elsewhere, a vast new cistern was constructed in the vicinity of the monastery of Chariton at Souka, known locally as the Bir el-'Uneiziya. Yizhar Hirschfeld observed that medallions of dressed stone containing crosses, carved into the cistern's interior wall, closely match those found at Justinian's Nea Ekklesia in Jerusalem.⁴⁹ Indeed, surveys of both sites concluded that the scale and quality of their construction strongly suggested imperial involvement. Elsewhere, Magen and Talgam, who oversaw the excavations at Ma'ale Adummim went so far as to argue that Martyrius' monastery was likely to have been expanded with funds

48 Cyril, *Vita Sabae* 73, p. 178.

49 Hirschfeld, *Judean Desert Monasteries*, pp. 63–65.

secured following the Samaritan Revolt of 529.⁵⁰ A similar argument was made by Hirschfeld for a group of a dozen monasteries located elsewhere in Roman Palestine, in western Samaria. He suggested that these sites, which surround the 'Fortress Monastery' at Deir Qala, were funded by Justinian in an attempt to rejuvenate lands ruined by the revolt.⁵¹ A folk memory of this spate of largesse may also be preserved in the name of the 'Justinian Tower,' the tallest structure of the still-active Desert monastery of Mar Saba.⁵²

In the *Buildings*, Procopius provides a lengthy list of Palestinian churches and monasteries either founded or restored by the emperor. Among them are several which appear to be located in the Judaeian Desert.⁵³ Procopius records substantial imperial donations to the 'Monastery of the Lazi in the Desert of Jerusalem,' and the 'Monastery of St. Panteleimon.' He also mentions a new well given to the 'Monastery of the Holy John on the Jordan,' presumably the abovementioned foundation of Anastasius. However the *Buildings*, primarily a work of rhetoric, was never intended to give a definitive list of Justinian's activities. Rather, it is highly likely that its coverage of imperial patronage of the Palestinian Church focused on a small number of well-known examples. This would seem especially likely if we were to speculate, as others have, that imperial patronage in the Desert was actually distributed between many monasteries from large, centralised funds, such as that supposedly overseen by Sabas after 532.

The motivation behind such donations was clearly political, as well as religious. That Justinian and his advisors appreciated the propaganda value of well-publicised imperial support for Palestine's religious sites is attested by the elaborate dedicatory inscription found in the remains of the Nea Ekklesia, naming the emperor as its founder. Elsewhere, his decision to expand Zeno's basilica on the site of the Samaritan Temple at Mount Gerizim appears as a triumphalist project, completed as much for ideological, as religious, reasons. The crucial role envisaged for monks in the imperial ideology of the Justinianic regime is evident in its legislation. A summary of their perceived political importance may be found in the prologue to the emperor's *Novels* 133:

50 Yitzhak Magen, "The Monastery of St. Martyrius at Ma'ale Adummim," in *Ancient Churches Revealed*, ed. Yoram Tsafrir (Jerusalem, 1993), pp. 170–196, at pp. 175–185.

51 Yizhar Hirschfeld, "Deir Qal'a and the Monasteries of Western Samaria," in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East*, ed. John Humphrey, vol. 2 imprint (Portsmouth, RI 2002), pp. 155–189.

52 Patrich, *Sabas*, pp. 63–67.

53 Procopius, *Buildings*, ed. Henry B. Dewing (London 1940), 5.6–9, pp. 343–359.

Where, however, these holy persons pray to God for the prosperity of the government with pure hands, and souls free from every blemish, there is no doubt that Our armies will be victorious, and Our cities well governed; for where God is appeased and favourably disposed towards us, why should we not enjoy universal peace and the devotion of our subjects?⁵⁴

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would suggest that imperial patronage assumed an important role within the monastic economy of the Judaeen Desert during the sixth century. Its prominence is notable in the accounts provided by local hagiographers, whilst its imprint may perhaps also be seen in the physical remains of their monasteries. Though initially a threat during the reign of Anastasius, imperial patronage would appear to have become a preferred source of income for some Desert monasteries under the emperor Justinian. Its growing importance was, in part, a result of the ecclesiastical reforms of the previous century. This paper has limited its area of study to one centre of Late Antique monasticism. However, the question of imperial monastic patronage is one of clear significance in the broader religious and socio-economic history of the period. The analysis pursued here is thus likely to have a wider application, whether locally, at Gaza or Sinai, or elsewhere in the late Roman world.

54 Justinian, *Novellae*, 133.5, 3:674; *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 17:136–137. An alternative, unpublished English translation of the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* by Fred Blume is available at: <http://www.uwo.edu/lib/blume-justinian>.

Citadels of Prayer: The Christian Polis under Siege from the Summer of 502 to the Summer of 626

David Gyllenhaal

Introduction

We cannot imagine the agony. Prior to the advent of strategic bombing and nuclear weapons in the twentieth century, the urban imagination encompassed no possibility more apocalyptic than a sack. At its mildest, the ancient sack was burglary on a devastating scale – stripping a city of hundreds of years of accumulated wealth and heritage in the space of a few days. The Visigothic sack of Rome in 410 was the very best that a city could hope for.¹ At its worst, a sack was the extermination of an entire urban community within the space of a few hours, using nothing more sophisticated than steel and sinew. St. Ephrem's Nisibene hymns, written after the failed sieges of Nisibis by Shapur II, voice the worst fears of an ancient city: "For the old men have been rescued from captivity, the youths from torture, the sucklings from being dashed in pieces, the women from dishonour, and the Church from mockery."² Ephrem's Nisibene hymns stand at the beginning of a new tradition of pious exhortation and reflection: the Christian response to the possibility and actuality of siege and sack.

Taking as the chronological bookends for our inquiry the siege of Theodosiupolis in the summer of 502 and the siege of Constantinople in the summer of 626, we will explore the range of cultural and institutional coping strategies available to the Christian city in times of siege. The primary focus for our examination will be on the role played by the episcopate and the cult of relics and icons. Both of these Christian phenomena played a crucial *prismatic* role in times of siege – instantiating, focusing, and reinforcing the sense of civic identity and civic solidarity that carried the Christian *polis* through its time of maximum stress. In a paper of this length, we can only venture to give a

¹ Peter Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History of Rome and the Barbarians* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 227–235.

² Ephrem, *Nisibene Hymns*, ed. Edmund Beck (Leuven, 1961), 2.6; trans. Stephen Bonian, *Parole de L'Orient*, 11, p. 159.

brief and primarily descriptive survey, but there are some tentative conclusions to be drawn on the shifts in emphasis we witness as our period progresses. Above all, we can recognize – and hopefully attempt to explain – the eclipse of the bishop as the personal focus of civic identity and solidarity in favour of an invisible supernatural protector, visibly instantiated in a relic or icon.

The ancient siege was essentially a test of nerve and endurance, not so very different from a pitched battle in the open field: it was when one side broke and routed that the real slaughter began. For those inside the city walls, it was a test of the solidarity of the urban community. The overwhelming burden of vigilance fell on the citizens themselves, who often manned and maintained sections of the walls according to the divisions of the urban *collegia*.³ The rewards of betrayal could be tempting. The Anastasian War of 502–506 between East Rome and Persia provides a wealth of examples. The first siege of the war, when the Persian *shahanshah* Kavadh attacked Theodosiupolis in the summer of 502, was hardly a siege at all. Within days of its investment, the governor, Konstantinos, betrayed the city to the Persians. He was richly rewarded, receiving a commission in Kavadh's army.⁴ *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, written by an anonymous Edessene cleric reflecting on the divine purpose at work in the events of the Anastasian War, is riddled with accounts of traitorous conduct in times of siege.⁵ Pseudo-Joshua reveals a pervasive wartime anxiety over elements whose inclusion within Christian civic identity was already suspect – above all Jews. His account of the siege of Tella-Constantina in the summer of 503 involves the Jews of a local synagogue, which adjoined a tower of the curtain wall, digging a secret tunnel for Persian use. Their plot is betrayed by a Roman prisoner in the Persian ranks, and the Romans inside the city then investigate:

Inside the tower a large tunnel had been made ready by [the Jews], just as they had been told. When the Romans saw that it was there, they went out against them in great anger and combed through the whole city, slaughtering all the Jews they could find, men and women, old and young.⁶

It was the responsibility of the bishop – at first personally, but later by means of the invisible protectors and visible relics and icons whose literary and liturgical

3 Benjamin Isaac, *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 333–371.

4 *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, ed. William Wright (Cambridge, 1882), 49; trans. Frank R. Trombley and John W. Watt (Liverpool, 2011), p. 51.

5 *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, 1–4.

6 *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, 58.

exhibition he coordinated – to focus and reinforce civic solidarity and civic confidence in the face of myriad temptations to betrayal or laxity.

Πολιοῦχος καὶ Στρατηγός: The Hierophanic and Totemic Bishop of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries

At the turn of the sixth century, the great Syrian exemplar of Christian civic resistance was the ascetic-bishop Iakobos of Nisibis. Theodoret's description of him in his account of one of the Persian sieges of Nisibis is illuminating, "[...] he was the bishop, guardian, and general of this city",⁷ Iakobos was not only the city's bishop, he was its "guardian and general". We must take each of these illuminating descriptors in turn, starting with *poliouchos* (πολιοῦχος), more properly translated as "civic guardian". The word was traditionally associated with the protective action of a city's patron deity, as in the exhortation of the chorus in Aristophanes' *Knights*:

Pallas, Guardian of the city (πολιοῦχε), | Lady of the most sacred | Of all lands, which excels | In war, in poetry | And in power: | Come hither, bringing her | Who in expeditions and battles | Is our helper, | Victory, the companion of our choral songs, | Who strives with us against our foes.⁸

This was a role that Athena was still able to play well into Late Antiquity. The pagan historian Zosimos insists that she is to be credited for the fact that one of Alaric's predatory expeditions stopped short of sacking Athens:

The reason why the city escaped destruction is worthy – as something which is godly and calls its hearers to piety – of not being passed over in silence. Alaric said that he and all his army would see both Athena Promachos pacing round (περινοστοῦσαν) the city wall, just as she may be seen in the statues, armed (ὥπλισμένην) and ready to take on all comers, and the hero Achilles standing upon the walls, just as he is described by Homer when waging war against the Trojans in his rage to avenge the death of Patroclus.⁹

7 Theodoret of Cyrillus, *Church History*, ed. Léon Parmentier (Berlin, 1998), 2.30.2: "ταύτης ἐπίσκοπος ἦν καὶ πολιοῦχος καὶ στρατηγός Ἰάκωβος."

8 Aristophanes, *Knights*, ed. F. W. Hall and W. M. Geldart (Oxford, 1922), 581–590; trans. Alan Sommerstein (Warminster, 1981), pp. 64–65.

9 Zosimus, *New History*, ed. François Paschoud (Paris, 2003), 5.6.1, p. 12.

The faith of Zosimos may have been on the wane, but his style of piety would long remain alive and well. One of the most remarkable transformations engendered by the progress of Christianisation was the process by which the bishop came to concentrate in his own person the functions of a civic deity. This was a natural consequence of the so-called “asceticisation of the episcopate” by which the holder of episcopal office came to bear an extraordinary load of symbolic freight.¹⁰ Claudia Rapp has identified “ascetic authority” as both a precondition and the confirmation of a Late Antique bishop’s “spiritual authority” as an ordained *episkopos* and his growing “pragmatic authority” in the management of city affairs.¹¹

This charismatic tricolon allowed the *bishop* to play an extraordinary *hierophanic* role in times of siege.¹² In Theodoret’s account of the siege of Nisibis, bishop Iakobos’ personal prayer and personal exhortation unify the city in its efforts to repel the Persian assault: Iakobos prismatically concentrates the energies of the civic community *in his own person* – as a living tear in the fabric separating the sacred from the profane. The siege is concluded when Jacob ascends the walls to pronounce a curse on the Persian army, summoning a swarm of gnats and other insects that fill the trunks of the elephants and reduce the Persian ranks to chaos.¹³ The bishop has assumed a hierophanic mantle: through the strength of his personal holiness, the bishop becomes a powerful manifestation of sacred power, capable of concentrating the collective energies of the civic community and overawing the enemy. He is the natural successor to the pagan patron deity as the *poliouchos* of his city.

The bishop’s hierophanic power also allowed him to take on a *totemic* role as the visible instantiation of civic identity in times of siege. This points us to the second word of Theodoret’s descriptive couplet, because the bishop’s totemic magnificence allowed to him to play the role of *stratēgos* in much the same way as a military leader was able to act in the field. Theodoret’s account of the earlier siege of Theodosiupolis by Bahram V, in the Theodosian War of 421–422, provides the prototype for this kind of role:

10 For the most complete study of the phenomenon of the “monk-bishop” in Late Antiquity, consult Andrea Sterk, *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004).

11 Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (London, 2005), pp. 18–20.

12 The hierophany is, in the terminology of the great Romanian scholar of religion Mircea Eliade, a “breakthrough [. . .] of the sacred into the World”: Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality* (Long Grove, 1998), p. 6.

13 Theodoret, *Church History*, 2.30.

Gororanes had encircled that city for more than thirty days with his whole force and brought up helepoles and furnished myriad engines of war and raised high towers against the wall. Only the divine archpriest stood his ground (this man's name was Eunomius) and brought down the charge of the approaching war engines. And when our aforementioned generals would not dare battle against the enemy nor come to the aid of the besieged, this man set himself in array and guarded the city impregnable. When one of the kings acting on behalf of the barbarians had made bold with his familiar blasphemy, making proclamations like those of Rabshakeh and Sennacherib and insanely threatening to burn down the divine church, that divine man, refusing to bear this raving, and having ordered the stone-thrower (which was named after the apostle Thomas) to be placed against the parapet and given word that a great stone should be placed in it, commanded that it be loosed in the name of The Blasphemed. And it came down bang on that impious king; it slammed into his loathsome mouth, it smashed his face, it shattered his whole skull, and it sprinkled his brains on the ground.¹⁴

Theodoret's martial portraits of contemporary bishops as effective *stratēgoi* are certainly striking, but the evidence they provide can easily be supplemented using the accounts generated by peacetime religious controversy. The totemic function that episcopal office and episcopal succession had assumed for the early Byzantine *polis* not only in collective civic action but in collective civic *memory* was vividly demonstrated during Justinian's efforts to resolve the Chalcedonian crisis. His attempts to restore good relations with both Rome and the anti-Chalcedonians foundered in part on the hard-line stance of Pope Hormisdas, whose *libellus* of 521 demanded, among other things, that specific anti-Chalcedonian patriarchs were to be erased from the diptychs – the list of holy figures commemorated at the consecration of the Eucharist. Anti-Chalcedonian figures who had been willing to negotiate and compromise on Christological formulations drew the line at erasing figures of pride and renown in their own cities from the diptychs.¹⁵ There could be no clearer expression of the role that the Late Antique bishop had come to occupy in his city: to anathematize any link in the chain of spiritual lights linking an urban Roman to his city's apostolic past was to anathematize a crucial part of his own

14 Theodoret, *Church History*, 5.37.

15 Volker Menze, *Justinian and the Making of the Syrian Orthodox Church* (Oxford, 2008), p. 67.

identity. As we enter the sixth century, the expectations for the bishop could not be higher.

Frustrated Expectations: Disappointing Episcopal Performance in Sixth-Century Siege Warfare

Thus it comes as something of a shock to see most bishops playing a decidedly mediocre role in the siege accounts of the sixth century. Our witnesses to the Anastasian and Justinianic wars clearly still *expect* the bishop to fulfil the extraordinary hierophanic and totemic functions that his office demands: the *absence* of a bishop from his city is always noted in our accounts. Yet the besieged bishops we encounter in the accounts of Pseudo-Joshua, Pseudo-Zachariah, Evagrius Scholasticus and Procopius are often conspicuous precisely for their absence. According to Pseudo-Joshua, when Petros, bishop of Edessa, travelled to Constantinople to request a tax remittance even as the threat of another siege loomed, he was sternly rebuked by Anastasius, who “reacted angrily to him and criticised him for abandoning the care of the poor at a time like this and going up to [the emperor].”¹⁶

We might be inclined to attribute this more lukewarm depiction of wartime episcopal behaviour to the character of our sources. Much of our evidence for the preceding century comes from Theodoret of Cyrrhus, himself a bishop with a rather exalted conception of his own office. Our evidence for the sixth century by contrast is both more abundant and more varied in its origins, and little of it arrives by way of the episcopal pen. Pseudo-Joshua, Evagrius Scholasticus, and Pseudo-Zachariah – in contrast to his authentic eponym, who was bishop of Mytilene – were drawn either from the lower clergy or the monastic orders, and Procopius was a secular historian writing in the classicizing tradition.¹⁷ The most economical explanation would seem to be that our conception of the bishop’s importance has been artificially inflated by partisans of the office, above all Theodoret. Our non-episcopal sources for the sixth century would thus inject a much needed dose of perspective.

¹⁶ *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, p. 78.

¹⁷ *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, pp. xxi–xxix; *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor: Church and War in Late Antiquity*, ed. Geoffrey Greatrex, trans. Robert R. Phenix and Cornelia C. Horn (Liverpool, 2011), pp. 3–11, 32–38; *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, trans. Michael Whitby (Liverpool, 2000), pp. xiii–lx; Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 3–33.

However, there is a serious problem with this explanation, in that it fails to account for the clear conviction we find in these non-episcopal sources that bishops *should* be playing the champion for their cities, and the obvious relish they take in recounting the rare occasions when bishops lived up to these expectations. Though taken as a whole, the bishops of the sixth century accounts emerge as distinctly non-exemplary figures, there are numerous examples of bishops behaving just as heroically as a reader of Theodoret might expect them to. An excellent example is that of Bar-Hadad of Tella-Constantina as he appears in the account of Pseudo-Joshua:

They guarded the city with care, night and day, while the holy Bar-Hadad would go round visiting them, praying them and blessing them. He praised their diligence, gave them encouragement, and sprinkled holy water on them and on the city wall. He also carried the Eucharistic bread with him on his rounds to enable them to have communion at their posts, so that none of them should abandon his guard and go down from the wall. He even went out confidently to the Persian king and spoke with him and mollified him, and when Kawad saw the man's seriousness and appreciated the vigilance of the Romans, it seemed to him pointless to be doing nothing at Tella with the whole army which he had with him.¹⁸

Bar-Hadad exemplifies the hierophanic and totemic function of the episcopal office. Nevertheless Bar-Hadad is more the exception than the rule, much like Megas of Beroea, the bishop whose efforts to save his city stand out most impressively in the Procopian account of Justinian's Second Persian War.¹⁹ The bishops occupying the most prominent episcopal seats put on a disappointing performance in nearly all of our sources: when Antioch was sacked in 540, the Chalcedonian patriarch Ephrem had already fled in disgrace, accused of favouring surrender.²⁰

The Sources of Episcopal Mediocrity

This widening fissure between expectation and actuality cues us to a paradoxical feature of the sixth century: the formal authority of the bishop was

¹⁸ *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, p. 58.

¹⁹ Procopius, *De bellis*, ed. Jacob Haury (Leipzig, 1962), 2.6–2.7, pp. 173–183.

²⁰ Geoffrey Greatrex and Samuel N. C. Lieu, *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars, Part II: AD 363–630: A Narrative Sourcebook* (London, 2002), p. 103.

waxing highest just as his charismatic authority was beginning to decline. This was especially true in Syria, where two important processes, one distinctively local and one common to the empire as a whole, were gradually edging the spectacularly charismatic monk-bishops of the fourth and fifth centuries out of the picture. First, there was the ongoing trauma of the Chalcedonian crisis. Chalcedonian determination to install an orthodox bishop in every Syrian episcopate dipped and swelled in accordance with shifts in imperial policy. Nevertheless, control of the key seats was always contested, and the bitterness and division this inevitably engendered was a powerful drag on any bishop's potential charisma. Even if he was renowned for his ascetic virtues, the prospective bishop's hierophanic and totemic function as the prism of civic unity would always be fractured by the hostility of hard-line Chalcedonian or anti-Chalcedonian elements within his city. This was of course hardly a new phenomenon, but the growing calcification of doctrinal division as the sixth century progressed, and ultimately the ordination of a separate Miaphysite hierarchy, undoubtedly put a degree of pressure on the episcopal office that was genuinely unprecedented.²¹ As Khosro II steamrolled the Roman Near East in the heady decades of 602–622, he cleverly exploited these civic fractures by expelling Chalcedonian bishops and replacing them with Jacobite bishops summoned from Persia.²²

Second, there was a growing necessity for bishops to be both skilled in administration and politically acceptable to a broad spectrum of the civic notables. The *Codex Justinianus* makes the bishop, as the “father” of his city, jointly responsible with landowners of “good repute” for supervising public and private expenditure on the full range of civic necessities, including the grain supply, the building of walls or towers, and the repairing of bridges or pavements.²³ The development of this trend in the fifth and sixth centuries was a key part of the process by which the candidates most spectacular for their ascetic charisma were edged out in favour of practically minded administrators, who simply integrated the now-customary ascetic sojourn into their *cursus honorum*. Ironically, the expanding charisma of the episcopal office created the circumstances of its own constriction: the charisma-driven accumulation of a deposit of pragmatic authority generated the necessity of bringing episcopal appointments and episcopal behaviour under stricter control.²⁴

21 Menze, *Justinian and the Making of the Syrian Orthodox Church*, pp. 145–193.

22 *The Chronicle of AD 1234*, trans. Andrew Palmer (Liverpool, 1993), 21, p. 125.

23 *Codex Justinianus*, ed. Paul. Krueger (Berlin, 1877), 1.4.26, pp. 42–44.

24 In many ways this simply confirms a process that had been ongoing since the mid-fifth century, and had roots even earlier. Cf. Daniel F. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks:*

The sixth- and seventh-century bishop was no less integral to his city than his fourth- and fifth-century counterparts – in fact he was almost certainly *more* essential to the smooth conduct of city affairs. Nonetheless he was undoubtedly less charismatic, and therefore less prismatic: he did not possess the otherworldly grandeur that would have qualified him to play a hierophanic and totemic role during the crisis of a siege. This is not to say that the bishops of the sixth and seventh century were necessarily any less courageous, upright, or dedicated to their cities, but that they were more *dependent* and *constricted*. This was true in a variety of ways, they were closely supervised by imperial representatives and local power brokers well aware of their potential power, their legitimacy was contested by Chalcedonian or anti-Chalcedonian partisans, and, crucially, they did not have the support of an independently established reputation for ascetic holiness.

Yet the requirements of the Late Antique city remained unchanged. For the Syrian and Balkan frontiers, the sixth and seventh centuries were periods of near perpetual insecurity and crisis in the face of Slavic, Avar, and Persian incursions. The unifying energies of the hierophantic and totemic bishop – dissipating and yet desperately needed – would have to re-crystallize somewhere.

Invisible Guardians: The Rise of Relics and Icons

The city of Edessa was besieged three times before the middle of the sixth century, turning back first Kavadh and then Khusro in humiliation. Our accounts for these sieges provide us with a vivid glimpse into the remarkable shift in agency which arose in response to the problem outlined above. Whereas the bishops of Nisibis, Theodosiupolis, Tella-Constantina and Beroa figure as the main protagonists in the wartime story of their cities, the protagonist of the Edessan memoir is not its bishop, but Christ himself. We gain our first glimpse of this fascinating transformation in Pseudo-Joshua's account of Kavadh's siege in the summer of 503. The bishop Petros does not even figure in the drama. Rather, the city and its inhabitants give themselves over totally to the mythical promise of Christ to King Abgar of Edessa, according to which the city will never fall.

As Pseudo-Joshua's account of Kavadh's siege opens, the general Areobindus is already within the walls with a force of Roman soldiers; but they prove to be

Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity (London, 2002); Phil Booth, *Crisis of Empire: Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity* (London, 2014), pp. 1–33.

mere bit-players in the central drama of the siege. It is the city's inhabitants, lightly armed but fired by their faith in Christ's assurances, who play the main role in the Persian defeat. The first episode of note comes when Areobindus holds a council with the "nobles of the city" during a lull in the siege. After his first attempt on the walls came to nothing, Kavadh had withdrawn from the city on condition that after a period of twelve days Edessa should surrender two thousand pounds of gold; however on the following day he had sent an envoy to collect three hundred pounds in advance. Areobindus gathers the civic notables in order to arrange the payment of the sum, but they insist that Christ's promise gives them the assurance they need to rebuff this violation of the agreement:

We should not send any gold to this deceitful man. As he has gone back on his word and not waited until the day came which you agreed with him, so will he go back and play false when he gets the gold. We believe that if he makes war with us, he will suffer ignominy, because Christ will protect this city.²⁵

Their boardroom courage is, surprisingly, shared by the city's inhabitants, who make a spontaneous sally against the returning forces of an enraged Kavadh, despite being armed only with slings and stones. For Pseudo-Joshua, the biblical resonance proves irresistible:

Like the Philistines who went up against Samson and who although numerous and armed could not kill him, while he, unarmed as he was, killed a thousand of them with the jaw-bone of an ass, so too the Persians, Huns, and Tayyaye, although falling with their horses from the stones which the slingers were hurling, could not kill any of them.²⁶

It is the solidarity of the entire civic community in the face of the enemy that proves to be the deciding factor, and this solidarity is a product of their conviction that Christ Himself is the agent of their struggle. In a time when such things were more suspect than they had ever been, Bishop Petros' personal holiness and personal orthodoxy – in fact even his presence – were immaterial to the city's fate. It was Christ Himself, whose conduct and orthodoxy could never be questioned, who assumed the prismatic role of the *poliouchos*.

²⁵ *Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, p. 62.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Nor is this claim for direct supernatural agency restricted to Pseudo-Joshua or even to clerical authors, because it is mirrored exactly in the opening of the Procopian account of the second siege of Edessa, undertaken forty-one years later by Kavadh's son Khosro I, in the year 544:

In the following year Khosro son of Kavadh invaded the land of the Romans for a fourth time, leading an army into Mesopotamia. The invasion of this Khosro was made not against Justinian emperor of the Romans – nor indeed against anyone of the rest of humankind – but solely against the very God Whom the Christians worship. For since he had retreated in failure during the first onslaught against Edessa, a great dejection had come over him and the Magi because they had yielded before the God of the Christians.²⁷

In his second attempt on the city – he had aborted the first when Christ's promise inflicted him with a suppurating face sore and swelling of the jaw – Khosro pins his hopes on the construction of a gigantic siege mound, which edges gradually closer to the city like a moving mountain.²⁸ The defenders dig a mine beneath the wall and under the mound, supporting the chamber with timbers. It is at this point that the famous Image of Edessa first appears in the historical record, in Evagrius Scholasticus' account of these same events. The city now has a visible totem to instantiate the presence of its divine *poliouchos*. In the Evagrian account, the defenders beneath the mound attempt to set the timbers alight, but are foiled by the lack of oxygen:

And so when they had reached a point of total despair, they brought the divinely fashioned image not made by human hands, sent by Christ-God to Abgar when he desired to see Him. Then when they had brought the all-holy image down the trench they had made and drenched it with water, they spilled some of it on the fire and the timbers as well. And the divine power was instantly manifested to the faith of those who had done this, and what had previously been impossible for them was accomplished, for the timbers instantly accepted the flame [...].²⁹

27 Procopius, *De bellis*, 2.26.

28 Procopius, *De bellis*, 2.12.

29 Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Joseph Bidez and Léon Parmentier (London, 1898), 4.27, p. 175.

The city is saved again by the hierophanic and totemic presence of Christ. Nor is this shift towards explicitly supernatural agency restricted to Edessa alone. Evagrius also recounts an episode from the siege of Sergiopolis in which its eponymous martyr strikes Khosro with a vision of innumerable shields sprouting along the circuit wall – thus dissuading him from any further attempts on the city.³⁰

Our evidence thins notably after Justinian's Second Persian War, but we find remarkable evidence for an ongoing transformation in hierophanic and totemic agency in our accounts for the sieges of Thessalonike and Constantinople in the early-seventh century.³¹ For the sieges of Thessalonike, we are entirely reliant on *The Miracles of Saint Demetrios*, written by the city's bishop, Ioannes, in the early seventh century. The *Miracles* are essentially a florilegium of Demetrios' salvific agency in defence of the city. Demetrios personally kills the first Slav over the walls in the siege of 586 and appears armed and riding a white horse around the ramparts.³² In the later siege of the Avars a catapult stone inscribed with Demetrios' name collides with an enemy projectile in mid-air, causing it to rebound on an Avar siege engine.³³ Most remarkably of all, in the siege of 586 a man dreams of angelic messengers coming to retrieve Demetrios from his *ciborium*, telling him that he must leave the doomed city. Demetrios, however, *refuses*, insisting that he will stay in the city and share the fate of its inhabitants. The angels depart and the city is saved, presumably because a martyr could not possibly die a second time.³⁴ Thessalonike could not ask for a better *poliouchos*.

Our capstone account must be the Avar and Persian siege of Constantinople in 626.³⁵ The starring role of the Mother of God in saving Constantinople epit-

30 Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.28.

31 For supporting analyses of the rise of icons in the late sixth century, see Averil Cameron, "Images of Authority: Elites and Icons in Late Sixth Century Byzantium," *Past and Present* 84 (1979), 3–35; Ernst Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Age Before Iconoclasm," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954), 83–150.

32 *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démétrius et la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans* ed. and trans. Paul Lemerle (Paris, 1979), 1.29–45, pp. 75–82.

33 *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démétrius*, 2.182–190.

34 *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démétrius*, 1.166–175.

35 On the siege itself, see Franjo Barisic, "Le Siege de Constantinople par les Avars et la Slaves en 626," *Byzantion* 24, 71–395; Norman H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays* (London, 1955), pp. 248–60, the chapter entitled "The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople"; James Howard-Johnston, "The Siege of Constantinople in 626," in *Constantinople and its Hinterland*, ed. Cyril Mango and Gilbert Dagron (Aldershot, 1995), pp. 131–142.

omizes the metamorphosis that has been achieved since the early and mid-sixth century. As Averil Cameron says: “It has a flavour which one could not imagine transposed to the reign of Justinian.”³⁶ Our sources are unanimous in attributing the city’s salvation to the direct intervention of the Mother of God. The narrative of the *Chronicon Paschale*, the homily by Theodoros Synkellos, and Georgios of Pisidia’s *Bellum Avaricum* all feature the Virgin as the protagonist of their account. In the account preserved in the homily of Theodoros Synkellos, probably delivered as a public commemoration of the siege, the imagery is relentlessly martial:

And the Virgin was present everywhere, conquering invincibly, sowing fear and panic among the enemy, giving strength to her servants and preserving her charge inviolate, destroying the enemy swarm [...].³⁷

In the *Chronicon Paschale* the Virgin is likewise ubiquitous, sinking Slav canoes and striking fear into the hearts of the city’s enemies. Like Alaric before him, the Avar khagan is recruited as a trustworthy witness to the true reason for the city’s preservation: “And the ungodly Khagan used to say this, that at the time of the war, ‘I saw a well-dressed woman dashing round the walls all alone.’”³⁸

The patriarch Sergios, like bishop Ioannes of Thessalonike, figures as the impresario of the cult – but in a liturgical rather than a literary capacity – processing the Virgin’s icons in a continuous circuit of the walls, overawing the enemy and reinforcing the courage of Constantinople’s defenders.³⁹ It is the patriarch who marries the Virgin’s hierophanic manifestation in divine luck and spiritual visions to a totemic physical presence. In doing so he provides a startling image of the metamorphosis in the episcopal role that has taken place since the summer of 502. Like many of his episcopal contemporaries, Sergios was more administrator than ascetic: he served as a poorhouse guardian during his time as a deacon in Hagia Sophia.⁴⁰ He cannot have had the inhuman splendour of Iakobos of Nisibis, who lived for years outside his

36 Cameron, “Images of Authority,” p. 5.

37 Theodoros Synkellos, *On the Siege of Constantinople*, ed. and trans. Ference Makk (Szeged, 1975), p. 82.

38 *Chronicon Paschale*, ed. Ludwig Dindorf (Bonn, 1832), 626, p. 725.

39 Cameron, “Images of Authority,” p. 6.

40 Andrew J. Ekonomou, *Byzantine Rome and the Greek Popes: Eastern Influences on Rome and the Papacy from Gregory the Great to Zacharias, A.D. 590–752* (Plymouth, 2007), pp. 90–95.

city as a cave solitary.⁴¹ However, like his contemporary Ioannes, Sergios had learned how to transmute his liturgical role into direct charismatic authority by assuming responsibility for the coordination of a hierophanic and totemic supernatural presence. This transmutation took form both in the liturgical exhibition of relics and icons, and in the creation and patronage of literary products that reinforced and reshaped the invisible presence of the divine *poliouchos*. Sergios clearly took measures after the siege to establish the saving work of the Mother of God as the dominant narrative of events. The homily of Theodoros Synkellos and Georgios of Pisidia's *Bellum Avaricum* were both written under Sergios' patronage: both seem intended for public address to a Constantinopolitan audience on a significant occasion, and both structure the narrative of the siege around the saving agency of the Mother of God.⁴²

Conclusion

This is the key conclusion to be drawn from our examination of the spiritual dimensions of sixth and seventh century siege warfare: although the rise of icons is a notoriously difficult phenomenon to document, at least one piece of the puzzle must lie in the proliferating pressures on the episcopal office in the course of the sixth and seventh centuries. These pressures eventually disqualified the East Roman bishop from playing the hierophantic and totemic functions expected of him in earlier generations. Despite this, creative and effective men like Bishop Ioannes of Thessalonike and Bishop Sergios of Constantinople responded, recognizing and encouraging the opportunity provided by the cult of relics and icons whose liturgical and literary exhibition they scrambled to control. In a time when civic solidarity was increasingly paramount, the burden of responsibility was shifted from ordinary men touched by the extraordinary to the mute grandeur of relics, icons, and the supernatural presence they instantiated: the *poliouchos* and *stratēgos* of their favoured city.

41 Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Asceticism and Society in Crisis: John of Ephesus and the Lives of the Eastern Saints* (London, 1990), p. 12.

42 For the most lucid and recent discussion of these sources, see James Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 17–35, 138–162.

PART 4

The Cities



Province in Contrast to City: Irregularities and Peculiarities in the Coinage of Antioch (518–565)

Pavla Drápelová

The present paper focuses on certain features of the early Byzantine coinage,^{*} features which indicate the existence of real economic and cultural differences between the city of Constantinople and provincial centres. We will be particularly concerned with the Antiochene output of Justin I (518–527) and Justinian I (527–565), not as a unique case, but as an indicative example of the information it is possible to glean from early Byzantine coins. In the sixth century specific irregularities and peculiarities occurred on coins struck in Antioch, which were unlike coins struck in the mint of Constantinople, as well as in other provincial mints. This paper thus seeks to interpret some of these peculiarities and to put them into a plausible historic context. By way of context, the Byzantine mint of Antioch started its activity in the second phase of Anastasian monetary reform, hence the period after 512,¹ and was closed at the beginning of the seventh century.² It is also important to note that this study is focused only on the bronze coins struck in that provincial mint,³

* I would like to express my gratitude to the IKY – Greek State Scholarship Foundation, to the programme “Plato Academy” and to the Leventis Foundation which supported me financially at various stages of my postgraduate studies and enabled me to pursue my research.

1 Wolfgang Hahn, *Moneta Imperii Byzantini I* (Wien, 1973), p. 36 (henceforth *MIB I*); David Michael Metcalf, *The Origins of the Anastasian Currency Reform* (Amsterdam, 1969), p. 96. In the Hellenistic period, the mint was opened during the reign of Seleukos I (306–281 BC) and its activity continues to be testified in the fifth century AD: William E. Metcalf, “The Mint of Antioch,” in *Antioch. The Lost Ancient City*, ed. Christine Kondoleon (Princeton, 2000), pp. 105–111. Despite that, there are no coins from the end of the fifth century. Wolfgang Hahn and Michael A. Metlich have argued that the mint was most probably opened around 516: *Money of the Incipient Byzantine Empire* (Wien 2000), p.30 (henceforth *MIBE*).

2 Philip Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in Whittemore Collections II: Phocas to Theodosius III (602–717) Part 1* (Washington, D.C., 1968), p.40 (henceforth *DOC II*).

3 There exist light-weight solidi which have been attributed to the Antiochene mint: cf. Alfred R. Bellinger, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks I: Anastasius I to Maurice (491–602)* (Washington, D.C., 1966), pp. 133, 240, 263, 281–282 (henceforth *DOC I*); Cécile Morrison, *Catalogue des monnaies Byzantines de la Bibliothèque nationale I (491–711)* (Paris, 1970), p. 91 (henceforth *BNP*).

as the striking of gold coins in Byzantine Antioch represents a rather problematic topic; indeed, not all numismatists agree on the attribution of specific light-weight solidi to the Antiochene mint.⁴

Justin I

It is clear from the unpublished collection of Petros Protonotarios – the private collection of the former president of the Hellenic numismatic society – that, in contrast to the Anastasian period, there can be identified Antiochene coins from the period of Justin I which bear specific irregularities. The private collection includes several unusual pieces (Fig. 11.1; Fig. 11.2). The irregularities on these Antiochene coins are related mainly to the lettering in the emperor's name, for example, letters either omitted or simply wrongly written. Omitted letters in the name of the emperor represent a particular problem. In the period of Justin and Justinian the emperor's names were usually lettered and spelled correctly, with the sole exception of Antiochene coins struck at the end of Justinian I's reign.⁵ One of the few irregularities which can be observed, and which was relatively normal in sixth century, is reverted letters, mainly S. This can be found also on other catalogued coins struck in various mints in Justin I's reign.⁶

To my knowledge, a missing letter in the name of Justin I occurs only once on a catalogued specimen in the DOC collections, where the letter "I" is found missing from a bronze Justin coin of the Nicomedian mint.⁷ In the Ashmolean museum's collection there exists another follis, this time struck in Constantinople, with an omitted letter S in the name of the emperor Justinian

4 The golden coins (only light-weight solidi) which were struck there in the periods of Justinian I, Justin II, Tiberius, and Mauricius did not differ importantly from the coins issued in the capital city: cf. *DOC* I, pp. 133, 240, 263, 281–282; *BNP* I, p. 91. Also several silver siliquae are known: cf. *BNP* I, p. 91. Hahn does not mention the gold coinage at all either in the *MIB* I, or in the *MIBE*. Adelson also attributed mint light weight solidi to the Antiochene mint: Howard L. Adelson, *Light Weight Solidi and Byzantine Trade During the Sixth and Seventh Centuries* (New York, 1957), pp. 98–101; *DOC* I, pp. 35, 133.

5 For the topic of blundered legends at the end of Justinian I's reign, see i.e. George E. Bates, "A Supplement to The Antiochene Copper of Justinian," *Museum Notes* 16 (1970), 69–79; Alfred R. Bellinger, "Byzantine Notes – The Antiochene Copper of Justinian," *Museum Notes* 12 (1966), 93–96.

6 The same mistake can be found e.g. on a coin in the *Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum* (London, 1908); *DOC* I, 48b.

7 *DOC* I, 33b3.

(IVSTINIANV_PPAVC).⁸ Nonetheless, in general, omitted letters in the emperors' names was not a common phenomenon during these two emperors' reigns.

Another interesting specimen is an Antiochene half-follis from the Protonotarios collection (Fig. 11.3). The obverse is not very well preserved, but it seems that the legend was cut properly. The reverse, however, is rather more interesting, as it is in fact a mirror image. Wolfgang Hahn and Michael Metlich studied a different coin with the same mirror-reverse in the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, identifying it as a regular coin of the Antioch mint (type MIB I, 61).⁹ Their explanation for the irregularities was, simply, careless die-engraving.¹⁰ It is important to mention that the mintmark was also cut inaccurately – on type MIB I, 61 the letters A and N were usually not above the patibulum of cross, but below. After a close study of both specimens, I am convinced that they both were struck with the same reverse die.

The published coins struck in Constantinople during the reign of Justin I were usually executed without any mistakes in legends and in mintmarks though the issue of mistakes in legends definitely needs more attention. This being said, there are not known examples of Constantinopolitan coins with a mirror-image to be found in general coins catalogues.¹¹ All mentioned coins from the Protonotarios collection belong to coin types which were struck during the whole period of Justin I's sole reign, so it is difficult to relate them to a specific historic situation, or to place them in a concrete historic context. They seem to be notable exceptions, since most of the catalogued and published Antiochene coins of these types from the period 518–527 do not bear any features distinctive to those issues struck in Constantinople.

When Justin I fell ill at the end of his life, his nephew Justinian was elevated to reign alongside him as co-emperor. During their short joint rule (April–August 527) coins with the figures of both emperors were struck (Fig. 11.4), though the image of two enthroned emperors occurred only on gold coins.¹² Moreover, this iconography did not influence bronze coinage, either in the capital city, or in the other provincial mints.¹³ That is, aside from the bronze coins struck in the mint of Antioch, which again represent a notable exception. In the Syrian mint's issues both co-emperors appeared on bronze coins,

8 No. 0009962.

9 *MIBE*, p. 36; *BNP*, p. 49.

10 *MIBE*, p. 36.

11 E.g. *DOC* I, *BNP* I, *MIB* I.

12 There is an example of gold coins from the joint reign struck in Constantinople, and there is a rare example of gold coinage from Thessalonike: *MIBE*, p. 41.

13 *MIBE*, pp. 40–41.

yet the iconography is rather different to that found on Constantinopolitan gold coins (Fig. 11.5). Instead of two enthroned emperors, two facing busts were depicted.¹⁴ The influence of early fifth and fourth century iconography is evident, and Wolfgang Hahn and Michael Metlich saw a similarity between the iconography of the two busts and *exagia solidi* from the period of Arcadius (395–408) or lead seals.¹⁵ Furthermore, the legend on these Antiochene coins starts to the right of the cross which is between the heads of the emperors. This is rather unusual too, as the legend normally starts on the left side from the viewer's point. The different execution of the legend results in the name of the junior *augustus* appearing on the left, the more 'honourable' side of a Byzantine coin.¹⁶ Additionally, the beginning of the legend is slightly different to the one on the Constantinopolitan coins, reading 'DNDN' for dominus noster, being written in order to refer to the two *augusti*. Same lettering of dominus noster can be found only on coins from Cyzicus. In Constantinople and Nicomedia the DN was not redoubled.¹⁷ Most notably, this distinctive iconography and unique legend is common to all bronze coins struck in Antioch during the period of the joint reign of Justin I and Justinian I. With this in mind it cannot be a phenomenon related to a limited number of coins, as in the case of omitted letters on obverses and mirror-images on the reverse of coins mentioned above.

The image of two facing busts on Antiochene bronze coins was not the only example of inspiration being drawn from older iconography. A seated Tyche (Fig. 11.6, Fig. 11.7) could occur on lower denominations in the periods of Justin I and Justinian I.¹⁸ A motif related to the local tradition as it appeared for the first time on local coins already in first century BC.¹⁹ It is important to mention that most of the ancient personifications and deities ceased to be depicted on coins by fifth century²⁰, this means that the seated Tyche on

14 *DOC* I, p. 60, 14–17.

15 *MIBE*, p. 41.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*

18 *MIBE*, p. 145 (no.140); *DOC* I, p. 55.

19 Philip Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London, 1982), p. 66; Mark D. Stansbury-O'Donnell, "Reflections of the *Tyche* of Antioch in Literary Sources and on Coins," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* 54 (1994), p. 55; Eva Christof, *Das Glück der Stadt, die Tyche von Antiochia und andere Stadttychen* (Frankfurt, 2001), p. 24.

20 In general, ancient deities stopped occurring on coins in the late antique period, and only Victory continued to be regularly depicted on coins after fifth century AD, as the figure partly acquired Christian symbolism: Numismatic Museum of Athens, *Nike-Victoria: on Coins and Medals* (Athens 2004), pp. 53, 62–63. An exception is also a figure of seated

Antiochene coins represent an important exception in the iconography of the Byzantine coins.

Justinian I

The Antiochene coinage in the period of Justinian I also poses lots of questions. One of the most important changes on Antiochene coins was the new version of Antioch's mintmark. A great earthquake damaged the city in 526 and two years later there was another devastating earthquake. Consequently, the name of Antioch was changed to Θεούπολις.²¹ Till 528 the basic mintmark was the abbreviation of the city's name, usually ANTIX (Fig. 11.8). After 528/9 various mintmarks of the city's new name occurred, and the versions could even differ among themselves (i.e. Fig. 11.9 and Fig. 11.10).²² Numismatists have attempted to relate different versions to specific mint periods.²³ Already in the 1960's Alfred Bellinger drew attention to the fact that some of the new mintmarks appear to be a complete misunderstanding of the letter T, which resembles more the Ψ, and explained this through illiteracy of the die-cutters.²⁴

At the beginning of Justinian's reign a specific imperial iconography occurred on Antiochene coins, with the figure of a seated emperor (Fig. 11.11) appearing on certain types of bronze coins (folles, half-folles and decanummia).²⁵ This seated emperor motif is not commonly found on coins struck in other mints of the period. On the diadem of the seated emperor a peculiar detail is visible – three rays, an iconographic feature particular to Antiochene coinage. Notably, ancient depictions of Antioch's Tyche display a complex mural

Constantinople who appeared on reverse of solidi in the period of Justin II: *MIBEC*, 21 and a figure on some Carthaginian silver coins which is sometimes interpreted as a personification of Carthage: *MIBEC*, 89.

21 Glanville Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria: From Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton, 1961), p. 530.

22 Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, pp. 66–67; *DOC* I, 136; *MIB* I, p. 62; Cécile Morrisson states as the date of change of the mintmark the year 529: *BNP*, p. 65.

23 Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, pp. 66–67; Bellinger, "The Antiochene Copper of Justinian," pp. 93–94.

24 Bellinger, "The Antiochene Copper of Justinian," p. 95.

25 *MIBE*, p. 60. According to Hahn and Metlich these coins were struck in between 532 and 537 AD, thus in the second lustral period of Justinianic rule. Bellinger dated the type in 529–533 AD: *DOC* I, p. 134.

crown.²⁶ Indeed, the figure of seated emperor could also be compared to the personifications of Constantinople, and Rome,²⁷ who similarly held a *globus cruciger* and spear like the enthroned emperor on the Antiochene coins. There is the question, however, as to whether the iconographic motifs of personifications could influence the appearance of seated emperors on these coins.

In 538/9 a reform took place which changed the iconography on the obverses of Byzantine coins,²⁸ and added a date of issue on the reverse of the folles (see Fig. 11.9).²⁹ A change in the weight of coins is also related to this reform. A weight increase to about ca.22 gr. is apparent in the case of bronze coins, but in 542 the weight was reduced and a reduction is even more obvious in the fifth decade of the sixth century.³⁰ Metcalf demonstrated in his study that the mints of the metropolitan region (Nicomedia, Cyzicus) immediately reacted to the weight reduction in Constantinopolitan mint, but he proved the mint of Antioch for some reasons was adopting some changes with a delay.³¹ In the beginning, Antioch followed the weight policy of Constantinopolitan coins, but after a break in minting in 540/541–541/542 caused by the sack of the city by the Persians,³² the mint of Antioch continued to issue bronze folles of high weight standard, even if the weight in Constantinople was already reduced by that period.³³ Two years after the sack of the city another break is testified in the mint. The break in the seventeenth (543/544), eighteenth (544/545), and nineteenth (545/546) years of the Justinian' reign is usually explained as a result of a plague epidemic which hit the city.³⁴ After the re-opening of the

26 Stansbury-O'Donnell, "Reflections of the *Tyche*," pp. 51–63: cf. the illustrations in that article.

27 *RIC X*, pl. 40 (1318).

28 The precise date is known thanks to a reference in a Justinian novel (Nov.47.1); Oscar Ulrich-Bansa, "Note su alcune rare monete di rame dell'imperatore Giustino II," *Numismatica e scienze affini* 2 (1936), p. 76.

29 Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, p. 60; *BNP I*, pp. 61–62; *DOC I*, pp. 69, 83.

30 David Michael Metcalf, "The Metrology of Justinian's Follis," *The Numismatic Chronicle* 20(1960), pp. 209, 218–219; Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, pp. 60–61.

31 Metcalf, "The Metrology," pp. 210–219.

32 James Allen S. Evans, *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power* (London, 1996), pp. 156–157, 226–227; John W. Barker, *Justinian and the Later Roman Empire* (Madison, 1966), p. 119; Geoffrey Greatrex, "Byzantium and the East in the Sixth Century," in *The Cambridge Companion to Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 488–489, 503.

33 Metcalf, "The Metrology," p. 210.

34 Bellinger, "The Antiochene Copper," p. 95; *BNP*, p. 65; *MIBE*, pp. 61–62.

mint in 546 a completely separate monetary policy was followed,³⁵ with the weight standard of the Antiochene coins continuing to be higher than those of Constantinople.³⁶

There is another numismatic phenomenon related to the reign of Justinian I which concerns us here. Towards the end of his reign, sometime around 562,³⁷ blundered or illegible inscriptions on folles and other denominations became common.³⁸ It is clear that the same obverse dies were used for half-folles, and inscriptions in these cases were often struck largely out of the flan, which prevents their detailed study.³⁹ The imperial portrait and design of the reverse did not differ significantly from coins struck in the previous years, nor is there apparent change in the weight-standard.⁴⁰ The phenomenon of blundered legends continued also after the death of Justinian and illegible legends can be found on coins of Justin II, Tiberius and Mauricius in the second half of sixth century.⁴¹

Several numismatists have attempted to interpret this phenomenon: Alfred Bellinger related it to the lack of literate die-cutters and stressed that illiteracy was the main problem.⁴² The same opinion had Philip Grierson who related the absence of literate workmen to the plague epidemic which severely hit the region.⁴³ George Bates formulated a hypothesis published in 1970 that the illegible legends were created intentionally, so as to express the anti-imperial sentiment of the city in which existed a strong environment of pagans and heretics who were often persecuted by Justinian.⁴⁴ Certainly it is true that the city of

35 Metcalf, "The Metrology," pp. 210–219.

36 Metcalf attempted to connect these to the riots in 553 mentioned in Chronicle of Ioannes Malalas. These riots arose due to the reduction in the coins' weight, and after suppression of the revolt the emperor ordered the coins restored to their original value. Malalas did not refer to where the incident happened, but Metcalf supposed it had to be either in Constantinople or in Antioch, and preferring Antioch since some of the coins struck in twenty-sixth regnal year (552/553) indeed had lower weight: Ioannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. Hans Thurn (Berlin, 2000), 18.117, p. 415.

37 *MIB* I, p. 64; Bates, "A Supplement," p. 73; Grierson dates the change to 561/2 AD: Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, p. 67.

38 *MIBE*, p. 62; *DOC* I, pp. 147–148 (figures 232a, 233a, 234).

39 Bellinger, "The Antiochene Copper," p. 96.

40 Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, p. 67.

41 *MIBE*, p. 62.

42 Bellinger, "The Antiochene Copper," p. 96; *DOC* I, p. 146.

43 Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, p. 67.

44 Bates, "A Supplement," p. 74.

Antioch was an important centre for pagans and heretics within the empire.⁴⁵ It is important to stress, moreover, that the phenomenon of illegible legends was again related only to Antioch, and is not evident in other Byzantine mints.

There is a final phenomenon in the mint of Antioch towards the end of Justinian's reign. At some point there was evidently opened seventh officina, as the letter Z' is attested on some coins, but no evidence of a sixth officina exists.⁴⁶ It seems that towards the end of Justinian's reign, the production was mainly concentrated, though not limited, to the third workshop, since many coins bear mark Γ.⁴⁷ The officina letter Γ becomes more prevalent during the reign of Justin II.⁴⁸

Conclusions

The phenomenon of missing letters on two Antiochene coins from the private and unpublished collection of Protonotarios family is not easily explicable, and it is important to note that inverted or omitted letters and wrongly spelled legends are often found on imitations.⁴⁹ Nevertheless the coins from the Protonotarios collection do not bear any other features of imitative coinage – such as reduced weight, a primitive style of imperial portrait, or a wrongly spelled or missing mintmark –⁵⁰ and their general style correspond to the regular coins struck in that period. However, a mistake in the emperor's name must be regarded as very unusual in the first half of sixth century. Already Alfred Bellinger stressed in his article of 1966 that mistakes in an emperor's name must be considered as rather serious, because nothing more elementary could be demanded of the men who struck the imperial money than to know the emperor's name.⁵¹ Some minor irregularities could occasionally occur in legends inform other mints' issues as well, but they are usually limited to a single reversed letter, and examples of coins with omitted letters in emperor's name are extremely rare. Without doubt the topic needs more attention. Especially

45 Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria*, p. 559.

46 *MIBE*, p. 62.

47 *MIBE*, p. 149.

48 *MIBE*, pp. 100–101.

49 Dobrila Gaj-Popovič, "The Appearance of the Barbarized Folises (Folles) in the 6th Century in the Balkan Peninsula," *Balkanoslavica* 2 (1973), 95–100; Yordanka Youroukova, "Imitations barbares des monnaies de bronze byzantines du VI^e siècle," *Byzantinoslavica* 30 (1969), 83–87.

50 Popovič, "The Appearance," p. 100 (figure 3); Youroukova, "Imitations barbares," pp. 83–87.

51 Alfred Bellinger, "Barbarous Folles of Iustinus I," *Museum Notes* 12 (1966), p. 89.

a systematic study of specimens in various collections might provide information on the phenomenon's frequency in sixth-century coinage, since it is not certain whether the mistakes were actually a widespread phenomenon or not.

The variations of Antiochene coinage in Justin I's reign indicate different conditions in the local mint compared to those in the capital city. Various written sources indicate that Antioch was facing serious problems in this period. The entirety of his reign was accompanied by riots caused by violent clashes between local circus factions.⁵² Moreover, there is evidence of serious economic problems of the city.⁵³ A great fire is testified in 525, and a catastrophic earthquake in 526, the consequences of which influenced trade and economy in the whole region according to scholars such as Alexander Vasiliev.⁵⁴ Since Justin's reign the region had faced Persian raids.⁵⁵ It is evident that the region suffered from instability caused by various factors, but it remains an open question whether this was the reason for the numismatic variations of Justin I's reign.

It is certain, however, that the Antiochene coins of Justin I indicate that, for whatever reason, not all the die-cutters of the mint could execute the dies well. Moreover, central government control of the mint was not equal to that exercised in Constantinople. One possible reason for this might be the fact that the population of Antioch was non-Latin speaking. Ioannes Malalas notes that the official announcements were made in Greek in sixth-century Antioch, indicating that Latin, in which the coins' legends were written, was

52 Downey, *A History of Antioch*, p. 516; Malalas, *Chronographia*, p. 338–344; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. Carl de Boor, 2 vols. [Leipzig, 1883 (repr. Hildesheim, 1963)], pp. 165–166 (AM. 6011 and 6012).

53 It is supposed the riots led to, among other things, the termination of local Olympic games, which had ancient pedigree and represented an important source of revenue for the city. For this, see Malalas, *Chronographia*, 17.13, p. 344; Downey, *A History of Antioch*, pp. 518–519; Alexander A. Vasiliev, *Justin the First: An Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), pp. 118–119; John H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 136–144. Peter Sarris writes about evidence of clashes between the aristocracy and poor in the fifth and sixth centuries based on the information in Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecc.His.*, 5.9. For this, see Peter Sarris, *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (New York, 2006), p. 232. Barker mentioned in his monograph also an “incompetent administration of the revenue system” which worsened the economic situation of Antioch during Justin's I's reign: Barker, *Justinian and the Later Roman Empire*, p. 73.

54 Malalas, *Chronographia*, 17.16, p. 346; Downey, *A History of Antioch*, p. 520; Vasiliev, *Justin the First*, p. 360.

55 Geoffrey Greatrex, *Rome and Persia at War, 502–532* (Leeds, 1998), p. 148; Downey, *A History of Antioch*, p. 532.

not a common language there.⁵⁶ Based on the evidence from the Libanius' works, modern scholars suppose that the knowledge of Latin was not as common as Greek among the inhabitants of Antioch in the fourth century AD.⁵⁷

Antioch in the period of Justinian faced regular conflicts with the Sassanid Persians,⁵⁸ culminating in 540 when the city was sacked and systematically plundered by Khusro.⁵⁹ The loss of control over the city resulted in no coins being struck in 540. The second break in mint activity which took place two years later is usually related in secondary literature to the plague which spread throughout the Byzantine Empire,⁶⁰ but only in Antioch is it supposed that this caused the closure of the local mint. What is more, after these breaks the Antiochene mint did not attempt to follow the changes in weight of Constantinopolitan bronze coins, its coins remaining heavier than those in the capital city.

The devastating earthquake lead to the change of the city's name at the beginning of Justinian I's reign resulted in introduction of new mintmarks.⁶¹ It is worthy of mention that it was not the only earthquake which happened in this region in the period of Justinian and it is obvious that the city had to face natural catastrophes several times.⁶² The repeating earthquakes and plagues logically resulted in population decline,⁶³ which also could negatively influence economic conditions and mint organization in the city of Antioch. The new mintmarks which started to appear on coins after re-naming the city are sometimes legible with difficulty and in some cases also do not always correspond precisely to the name of the city. The blundered legends on the

56 Evans, *The Age of Justinian*, p. 45; Downey, *A History of Antioch*, pp. 532–533; Malalas, *Chronographia*, 18.67, p. 393.

57 Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration*, pp. 242–248.

58 There is evidence of military problems related to the incursions, especially in the period after 525. It is known that in 529 al-Mundhir III, king of Lakhmids, reached the regions around Antioch, but he was unable to conquer the city: cf. Greatrex, *Rome and Persia*, p. 152. Antioch was always an important military centre for the organization of Syria, and already had this same role in the Roman period: cf. Michael Maas, "People and Identity in Roman Antioch," in *Antioch: The Lost Ancient City*, p. 20.

59 Barker, *Justinian and the Later Roman Empire*, p. 119; Greatrex, *Byzantium and the East*, pp. 488–489; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, p. 218; Malalas, *Chronographia*, 18.87, p. 405; Procopius, *De bello Persico*, ed. Jakob Haury and Gerhard Wirth, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1962), pp. 186–189 (II/8), 214 (II/14).

60 Downey, *A History of Antioch*, p. 553 (is referring to the testimonies of Evagrius' *Ecclesiastical History*).

61 Malalas, *Chronographia*, 18.29, p. 371; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, p. 178.

62 Downey, *A History of Antioch*, p. 558.

63 Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, *The Churches of Syrian Antioch (300–638 CE)* (Leuven, 2012), p. 163.

bronze coins which occurred at the end of the Justinian' reign are difficult to be explained, too, however an ignorance of the Latin language might be one of the factors, maybe in connection with the demographic decline. It is evident that some dies used for the obverses of folles in the period of Justin I and Justinian I were reused for striking half-folles,⁶⁴ a practice indicating economic caution which might have been caused by some economic difficulties.

Some iconographic motifs which occurred on the Antiochene coins struck in the studied period had its origins in the Roman iconography, however they did not occur on other Byzantine coins struck elsewhere in the period under consideration here. This shows that the local tradition and sense of local identity were strong and played an important role.

It should also be taken into account that the Constantinopolitan coins were spread in the Near Eastern region and that they were found in various Syrian sites (e.g. Apamea and Gerasa). Their findings often importantly exceed the number of coins struck in Antioch.⁶⁵ In the cases of Apamea and Gerasa, Constantinopolitan findings represented more than fifty per cent of coins' findings for the period of the end of fifth and first half of the sixth century.⁶⁶ In Antioch itself the findings of Constantinopolitan coins struck in the studied period represented only about 6% of all the coins finds for the period of Justin I and Justinian I.⁶⁷ Evidently, the mint of Antioch played mainly the role of supply of the city itself and its' vicinity.⁶⁸

It is evident that the mint of Antioch worked under different circumstances in comparison to the mint of Constantinople. Some of peculiarities which occurred on the coins cannot be found even in other provincial centers. The factors which could influence the occurrence of irregular features on Antiochene coins could be different and they could range from the difficult economic and political situations to the sack by Persians and different ethnic structure in the region which could influence the reality that the Latin language was not as

64 *MIBE*, pp. 41, 62; *BNP*, pp. 49, 93–94.

65 Andrei Gandila, "Early Byzantine Coin Circulation in the Eastern Provinces: A Comparative Statistical Approach," *American Journal of Numismatics* 21 (2009), pp. 171–172; Peter Guest, "The Production, Supply and Use of Late Roman and Early Byzantine Copper Coinage in the Eastern Empire," *NC* 172 (2012), p. 113.

66 Cécile Morrisson, "La monnaie en Syrie byzantine," in *Archéologie et Histoire de la Syrie II, La Syrie de l'époque achéménide à l'avènement de l'Islam*, ed. Jean-Marie Dentzer and Winfried Orthman (Saarbrücken, 1989), p. 196.

67 *Ibid.*; for the numbers see Dorothy Waage, *Antioch-on-the-Orontes. IV. Part 2. Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Crusaders' Coins* (Princeton 1952), pp. 148–161.

68 Morrisson, "La monnaie en Syrien byzantine," p. 195; Gandila, "Early Byzantine Coin Circulation," pp. 171–172.

spread as the Greek or Syriac ones.⁶⁹ The local tradition must be also taken in account. The archaeological findings indicate that the Antiochene coins were dedicated mainly for the local population which might had different needs and might react differently to some features of the coinage than the inhabitants of the capital city. Some of the presented irregularities were related to a limited number of coins, but some others were common for the whole emissions. In general, the lack of written sources on mint organization in the early Byzantine Empire does not let to state precise conclusions, however the coins indicate the conditions in Antiochene mint had to be different to those in the capital city and that maybe the imperial control in Antiochene mint was not as efficient as in other provincial mints. The Antiochene coins from the period of Justin I and Justinian I show that the provincial mint in general followed the general style of Constantinopolitan models, but not always and not faithfully and they can provide interesting evidence on local differences.



FIGURE 11.1 *Justin I, follis, mint of Antioch. 518–522 (MIBE 58).*
PETROS PROTONOTARIOS COLLECTION.

69 Downey mentioned in her monograph that the Syriac language was sometimes the only language which inhabitants of Syria knew, including Antioch: Downey, *A History of Antioch*, p. 534.



FIGURE 11.2 *Justin I, follis, mint of Antioch, 522–527 (MIBE 59).*
PETROS PROTONOTARIOS COLLECTION.



FIGURE 11.3 *Justin I, half-follis, mint of Antioch, 518–527 (MIBE 61).*
PETROS PROTONOTARIOS COLLECTION.



FIGURE 11.4
Justin I – Justinian I, solidus, mint of Constantinople, 4.4. – 1.8. 527 (MIBE 1d).
EX WIL LIAM HECKMAN
COLLECTION. COURTESY OF
CNG TRITON VIII (JAN 10, 2005.)
AND WILDWINDS.COM.



FIGURE 11.5

Justin I – Justinian, follis, mint of Antioch, 4.4. – 1.8. 527 (MIBE 10).
CLASSICAL NUMISMATIC GROUP,
ELECTRONIC AUCTION 324,
LOT 512 (APRIL 9, 2004), INC.,
WWW.CNGCOINS.COM.



FIGURE 11.6 *Justin I, pentanumium with a representation of seated Tyche, mint of Antioch, 522–527 (MIBE 67).*

THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG, PHOTOGRAPH © THE
STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. PHOTO BY ALEXANDER LAVRENTYEV.



FIGURE 11.7

Justin I – Justinian I, pentanumium with a representation of seated Tyche, mint of Antioch, 4.4. – 1.8. 527 (MIBE 13).
CLASSICAL NUMISMATIC GROUP,
ELECTRONIC AUCTION 324,
LOT 514 (APRIL 9, 2004), INC.,
WWW.CNGCOINS.COM.



FIGURE 11.8 *Justinian I, follis, mint of Antioch, 527 – 529 (MIBE 125).*
PETROS PROTONOTARIOS COLLECTION.



FIGURE 11.9
Justinian, follis, mint of Antioch, y.539/540 (MIBE 143).
EX WILLIAM HECKMAN
COLLECTION. COURTESY OF CNG
TRITON VIII (JAN 10, 2005.) AND
WILDWINDS.COM.



FIGURE 11.10 *Justinian, follis, mint of Antioch, y.546/547 (MIBE 145).*
PETROS PROTONOTARIOS COLLECTION



FIGURE 11.11 *Justinian, follis, mint of Antioch, 531/2–536/7 (?) (MIBE 130).*
PETROS PROTONOTARIOS COLLECTION.

Rome in the Seventh-Century Byzantine Empire: A Migrant's Network Perspective from the Circle of Maximos the Confessor

Philipp Winterhager

Introduction

“Why do you love the Romans and hate the Greeks?” – “I love the Romans for being of the same faith, and I love the Greeks for being of the same language.”¹ That is how Maximos the Confessor answers the question of the Constantinopolitan *sakellarios* during his high treason trial in the year 655. Although Maximos is being judged for supporting an African usurper, the financial secretary's question reveals that there must be something bigger at stake, at least from the viewpoint of a member of the capital's elite. From the perspective of this volume, the question can be understood as an attempt to put one city, Rome, in precarious relation to the rest of the empire.

Such an East-West dichotomy in the early medieval world has become highly questionable today, and we should not take it at face value. Indeed, for Early Byzantine historians from Constantinople, Italy and Rome were at the very edge of the Empire; contemporary Rome hardly ever appears in their works.² That applies especially to the seventh century, an era which sees Constantinople itself and its immediate surroundings in military danger from

¹ See *Relatio motionis*, in *Maximus the Confessor and his Companions. Documents from Exile*, ed. and trans. Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil (Oxford, 2002), 10, pp. 70–71: “Διὰ τί ἀγαπᾶς τοὺς Ῥωμαίους, καὶ τοὺς Γραικοὺς μισεῖς; [...] Ἀγαπῶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους ὡς ὁμοπίστους, τοὺς δὲ Γραικοὺς ὡς ὁμογλώσσους”. My translation differs here from the editors', but is the same as theirs in the following notes. The corpus was first edited by the same editors in *Scripta saeculi VII vitam Maximi Confessoris illustrantia* (Turnhout, 1999). One should note that the unusual term *Graikoi* (Γραικοί) seems to reflect a migrant's perspective, too. It seems to be of Roman origin. That fits the assumption that the Record of the Trial was penned by a close disciple of Maximos, who had probably been in Rome with him and had, therefore, adapted a migrant's identity, too.

² James Howard-Johnson, *Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century* (Oxford, 2013); Antonio Carile, “Roma vista da Costantinopoli,” in *Roma fra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2 vols (Spoleto, 2002), 1:49–100. Of course, Rome is a matter of particular interest to Byzantine historians, but mainly

the Persian, Arab, and Slav incursions. Modern historians have therefore long seen Byzantium and ‘the Latin West’ as parting civilizations after the end of the united Roman Empire.³ In recent decades, however, both Byzantinists and Medievalists have stressed the meaning of the Mediterranean *oecumene* also after the end of the Old Empire and the rise of Islam. The seventh century, from this perspective, has in recent approaches become one of a “World Crisis” or a “Crisis of Empire” rather than one of end, decline and fall – a crisis that could be coped with by the historical actors in that they created new narratives and understandings of their world.⁴

One of these recent works especially deals with Maximos the Confessor,⁵ the man who had to answer the *sakellarios* why he loved the Romans and hated the Greeks, focussing on theology and politics. Over the following pages I would like to approach Maximos as a migrant between Rome and other parts of the Empire. After introducing his biography, this paper argues for a social network perspective on his migration, focusing on individual migratory decisions rather than ecclesiological and political narratives. Subsequently my paper analyses some of the functional characteristics of this network.

Eastern and Western Identities in the Seventh Century?

The life and migration of Maximos the Confessor are best understood in the light of two major themes that dominated seventh century Byzantium: the Arab

as the ancient capital of the Empire and concerning papal theology. See also Franz Dölger, “Rom in der Gedankenwelt der Byzantiner,” *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 56 (1937), 1–42.

3 I limit myself here to judgements on Italy in some classic works. See, for example, Hans-Georg Beck, *Das byzantinische Jahrtausend*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1994), p. 15: “Italien ist seit dem 5. Jahrhundert ein Spielball der Barbaren. Die Welt, in der sich der Hellenismus frei entfalten konnte, wird kleiner und kleiner”. Cf. also the titles of the influential works by Ottorino Bertolini, *Roma di fronte a Bisanzio e ai Longobardi* (Bologna, 1941), and Thomas Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, 8 vols (Oxford, 1880–1899). With strong words, Hodgkin makes Italy a battlefield between East and West: “Had such a confederacy [i.e. between Justinian and the Ostrogoths] been possible, the Hesperian land would have escaped the extortions of Byzantine blood-suckers on the one hand, the ravages of half-savage Lombards on the other”: Hodgkin, *Italy*, 3:12.

4 Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses of a World Crisis*; Phil Booth, *Crisis of Empire: Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 2014). An important step to the re-evaluation of the seventh century was also John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge, Engl., 1990). Haldon, though, largely leaves out Italy, considering it “too different and too distant a world to be directly relevant to the history of the central lands of the empire”: Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, p. 4.

5 Booth, *Crisis of Empire*.

invasions and imperial doctrinal politics. Indeed, both these themes are closely connected. While after decades of war against the Persians the empire's southern frontier was quickly overrun by the Islamic armies, Emperor Herakleios and the Constantinopolitan patriarch Sergios seem to have looked for a way to reconcile internal religious conflicts between Chalcedonians and 'miaphysites' by promulgating the formula of 'one energy' in Christ. Several men, mostly from Palestine, opposed this doctrine, first of all Sophronios, patriarch of Jerusalem. The conflict would grow even harsher in the 640s when the imperial formula was modified to 'one will in Christ', although this was probably intended to appease the 'dyenergist' party.⁶ In that climate of anti-monotheletism, Pope Martinus I held a synod in Rome in 649 with clearly oecumenical aspirations, despite being attended almost solely by Italian bishops, not only without being encouraged or supported by the emperor, but also strictly against the theological doctrines promoted by him and his immediate predecessors.⁷ Maximos was one of the protagonists of this conflict. Together with a number of Greek-speaking monks he was among the main promoters of Pope Martinus' Roman synod against monotheletism; indeed, although a Roman council, its acts were originally written in Greek and subsequently translated to Latin. We know that Maximos worked on at least part of it directly.⁸

6 Richard Price, "Monotheletism: A Heresy or a Form of Words?," *Studia Patristica* 46 (2010), 221–232; Friedhelm Winkelmann, *Der monenergetisch-monotheletische Streit* (Frankfurt, 2001), esp. pp. 34–41. Winkelmann calls Sophronios' reaction to monenergism "einen fundamentalistischen und polemischen Dyoenergismus": Winkelmann, *Streit*, p. 37. An extensive analysis of the political context of developing monenergism and monotheletism (and the resistance against them) is given by Marek Jankowiak, "Essai d'histoire politique du monothélisme à partir de la correspondance entre les empereurs byzantins, les patriarches de Constantinople et les papes de Rome" (PhD diss., Paris, 2009), esp. pp. 15–220.

7 'Spiritual disloyalty' was in fact one of the accusations made to Martin and Maximos in their trials in the 650s: cf. *Relatio motionis* 4 (footnote 1), pp. 54–59, where Maximos denies the emperor to have clerical authority. The accuser replies: "Ταῦτα λέγων ἔσχισας τὴν ἐκκλησίαν". The argument is expressed with even more emphasis in the statement: "Καὶ πῶς, [...] εἴπερ Χριστιανὸς εἶ, μισεῖς τὸν βασιλέα;" *Relatio motionis* 1, p. 48) The Acts of the Lateran synod have been edited by Rudolf Riedinger: *Concilium Lateranense a. 649 celebratum*, ed. Rudolf Riedinger (Berlin, 1984). Riedinger's great merit is the discovery and proof that the acts were originally written in Greek and translated to Latin. He has supported this thesis in a series of articles, mostly collected in Rudolf Riedinger, *Kleine Schriften zu den Konzilien des 7. Jahrhunderts* (Steenbrugge, 1998).

8 Riedinger's argument that Maximos the Confessor was among the authors of the Greek acts does not have to be accepted, but Maximos' influence becomes clear in the terminology of the concluding *canones*: cf. Rudolf Riedinger, "Die Lateransynode von 649 und Maximos der Bekenner," and "Die Lateransynode von 649: Ein Werk der Byzantiner um Maximos Homologetes," in *Kleine Schriften*, pp. 167–179 and 221–238 respectively. Earlier, this idea was

According to his Syriac *Life*,⁹ Maximos was born in Palestine to a Samaritan father and a Persian mother, and was raised in several monasteries around Jerusalem. Fleeing the Persian invasions, he came to Africa where he met his teacher Sophronios, under whose influence he came into contact with the anti-monenergist movement. In the 630s both of them engaged in theological battle against what in their eyes was a Constantinopolitan heresy: monenergism and, later, monotheletism. After fleeing from Arab incursions in Palestine, again to Africa, around 640, Maximos' deeds included a dispute with the former, dethroned, patriarch Pyrrhos.¹⁰ Some years later he came to Rome where he probably prepared, and surely attended Pope Martinus' synod against monotheletism in 649. In the 650s he was arrested in Rome and accused of supporting the African usurper Gregorios of Carthage. He was eventually sent to Constantinople, tried and exiled to Georgia, where he died in 662.

So far, the imperial minister's question seems pretty plausible: "Why do you love the Romans and hate the Greeks?" Indeed it is easy to see Maximos as the protagonist of a group of Palestinians who moved to the western edge of the empire, went to Rome, and, drawing on ideas of papal primacy and existing military discontent, tried to spur a western rebellion against an unjust emperor in Constantinople. It would seem logical to suppose such narrative as Maximos' reaction to the crisis of his times.

This paper tries to provide a different view on Maximos, namely, a migrant's perspective. Such a different perspective is not meant to be a 'correct' or 'sole'

brought forth by Erich Caspar, *Geschichte des Papsttums von den Anfängen bis zur Höhe der Weltherrschaft*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1933), 2:558–559.

9 Sebastian Brock, "An Early Syriac Life of Maximos the Confessor," *Analecta Bollandiana* 91 (1973), 299–364. Before the discovery of this text, Maximos' biography had usually been reconstructed according to his Greek *Life*, although written at least three centuries after his death and apparently modelled on the biography of Theodoros Stoudites. See Bronwen Neil, "The Greek Life of Maximus the Confessor (BHG 1234) and its three Recensions," *Studia Patristica* 36 (2011), 46–53; Wolfgang Lackner, "Zu Quellen und Datierung der Maximosvita (BHG 3 1234)," *Analecta Bollandiana* 85 (1967), 285–316; Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, pp. 143–155. On Maximos' biography, see also Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (London, 2006), pp. 3–18. A chronological order of his works we owe to Polycarp Sherwood, *An Annotated Date-List of the Works of Maximus the Confessor* (Rome, 1952).

10 Handed down in the form of an actual record: *S. Maximi Disputatio cum Pyrrho*, ed. Jean-Paul Migne, in *Patrologia Graeca* 91 (Paris, 1862), cols 288A–361B. A detailed commentary is provided by Guido Bausenhardt, „In allem uns gleich außer der Sünde“. *Studien zum Beitrag Maximos' des Bekenntners zur altkirchlichen Theologie. Mit einer kommentierten Übersetzung der „Disputatio cum Pyrrho“* (Mainz, 1992), pp. 236–316.

answer how to understand his attitude towards Rome or the empire. My aim is rather to provide ideas for a possible ‘decentred’ narrative.¹¹ The background for this perspective is given by the fact that migration from the eastern part of the empire played an important role in seventh-century Rome. In a liturgical guide for the celebration of the baptismal rite from seventh-century Rome we find the order that the family of the baptized child should recite the Creed either in Greek or in Latin, depending on their respective use and tongue – with the Greek boys and girls being mentioned before Latin children in the sequence of the text.¹² One famous migrant was Theodoros of Tarsos, himself an attendant of the Lateran synod in 649, who later became archbishop of Canterbury, bringing with him Greek and Syriac exegetical techniques to England. There were also five Greek and/or Syrian speaking monastic communities in Rome founded within only one or two decades around 650.¹³ Even Pope Theodoros, who held the See of Peter when Maximos arrived in Rome, had a Palestinian background.¹⁴ Migrants’ perspectives on Rome in the seventh-century Byzantine Empire are, therefore, neither marginal nor irrelevant.

They are decentred, however. Migrants, besides merchants, pilgrims and others, seem to expose the fuzziness of the cultural borders assumed by modern scholarship. The experience of migration, accommodation and integration – or, conversely, disintegration – reveals the ambiguity and limited validity of traditionally constructed identities. In short, migrants are

11 Cf. Natalie Zemon Davis, “Decentering History: Local Stories and Cultural Crossings in a Global World,” *History and Theory* 50 (2011), 188–202. Further argument to replace traditional civilization-centred identities for ambiguity comes from Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (London, 2006), and Wolfgang Welsch, “Transculturality. The Puzzling Form of Cultures Today,” *California Sociologist* 17/18 (1994/1995), 19–39.

12 *Les Ordines Romani du haut moyen age*, ed. Michel Andrieu, 5 vols (Leuven, 1931–1961). Ordo XI.62 (Vol. 2, 1971, p. 434) reads: “tenens acolitus unum ex infantibus [...] interrogat eum presbiter: *Qua lingua confitentur dominum nostrum Iesum Christum?* Resp.: Graece. – Adnuntia fidem ipsorum *qualiter credant*. Et dicit acolitus symbolum graece, decantando in his verbis: *Pisteuo his ena theon*”.

13 Michael Lapidge, “The Career of Archbishop Theodore,” in *Archbishop Theodore: Commemorative Studies on his Life and Influence*, ed. Michael Lapidge (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 1–29; Jean-Marie Sansterre, *Les moines grecs et orientaux à Rome aux époques byzantine et carolingienne (milieu du VI^e s.-fin du IX^e s.)*, 2 vols (Brussels, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 9–31. They are mentioned in the context of the Lateran synod by Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, pp. 297–300.

14 Indeed almost all popes between 678 and 752 were Greek-speaking. Andrew Ekonomou provides a current, though not always sufficient, monograph: Andrew Ekonomou, *Byzantine Rome and the Greek Popes: Eastern Influences on Rome and the Papacy from Gregory the Great to Zacharias, A.D. 590–752* (Lanham, 2007).

‘in-betweens’. It is therefore questionable whether the relationship between Constantinople and Rome can be traced in terms of Eastern and Western ‘identities’, or, indeed, whether equivalent and stable identities are relevant categories for the examination of migration at all.¹⁵ By understanding Maximos the Confessor as a migrant, the question of why he decided to go to Rome, and his role in connecting the city to different places in the Mediterranean, can be answered without drawing primarily on political or ecclesiological identities.

Maximos the Confessor: A Migrant’s Perspective

For this I would now like to ‘zoom in’ to Maximos’ individual level and look at the process of migration itself. In general, the questions posed here are: why did someone migrate to a certain place, whom did he contact, and how did a migration network function? These questions address the social history of individuals, although in doing so one cannot ignore the fact that migration is always influenced by large-scale factors like politics, religion, or war. It must not be forgotten, for example, that Maximos around 640 was fleeing to Africa from the Arab war. The question here is thus not ‘why did he leave?’ Nonetheless, looking at an individual’s migration biography from a social historical perspective makes the individual choices that influenced the actual steps of migration seem less ideological. Placing a particular city in a Mediterranean context, the migrant’s perspective can thereby help to explain individual action in ‘decentred’ terms, rather than by traditional entities. Asking, in the case of Maximos, for the individual whereabouts – ‘why was it Rome that he fled to?’ – thus scrutinizes the meaning of preconceived entities such as ‘the empire’ and the ‘Western church’ in seventh-century Byzantium.¹⁶ In short: it seeks to add some social practice to structural explanations.

With this in mind, we should return to Maximos’ answer to the question cited at the outset. In saying that he loved the Romans as *homopistoi*, does he not refer to Rome and the popes as the head of the universal church? If he does, then he does not do so in a straightforward manner; indeed, he seems

15 See, among many others, Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, “Beyond ‘Identity,’” *Theory and Society* 29 (2000), 1–47.

16 My aim here is certainly not to relativize the ecclesiology of Maximos, so compellingly identified by Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, pp. 162–185, but rather to reassess its meaning for temporal affairs.

to think of such primacy as a temporal, historically conditioned position.¹⁷ Firstly, in his crucial letter about Rome, written after his arrival and the Lateran synod, Maximos does not mention the Roman church as an institution at all. He rather uses the much more general term “church of the *Rōmaioi*”, with the latter term, of course, being not necessarily restricted to the Romans of Rome.¹⁸ Although it is clear that after the synod in 649 Maximos favoured the popes in Rome as his allies against monotheletism, he seems cautious not to go too far in claiming general Roman primacy. Even in his discussion of Jesus’ famous words to Peter in the gospel of Matthew – “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” – Maximos switches to the perfect tense when it comes to the problem of infallibility: The church of the Romans is one that has “never been overcome by the gates of hell” ‘yet’, one could add.¹⁹ That does not imply that ‘Rome’ or the popes are generally without error,²⁰ but rather the city of Rome’s position is only historically conditioned. The same applies to the person of the pope. For example, when Maximos was confronted in his trial in Constantinople with the fact that the *apokrisiarioi* of the pope had just recently held communion with the monothelete patriarch of the imperial city, he replied: “The Holy Spirit, through the apostle, condemns even angels who innovate in some way contrary to what is

17 The following draws especially on Jean Claude Larchet, *Maxime le Confesseur médiateur entre l’orient et l’occident* (Paris, 1998), pp. 125–201. An English summary can be found in idem, “The Question of the Roman Primacy in the Thought of Saint Maximus the Confessor,” in *The Petrine Ministry. Catholics and Orthodox in Dialogue: Academic Symposium Held at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*, ed. Walter Kasper (New York, 2005), pp. 188–209.

18 The phrase in Greek is τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἀγιωτάτην Ἐκκλησίαν: *Maximi Confessoris Opuscula Theologica et Polemica ad Marinum*, Opusculum XI, in *Patrologia Graeca* 91, col. 137D. Concerning the church of the city of Rome proper, Maximos later actually cites his opponents with the terms “ἐκκλησία Ῥώμης” and “πάπα Ῥώμης”: *Letter of Maximus to Anastasius, his disciple*, ed. Allen/Neil (n. 1), pp. 120, and 122.

19 *Maximi Confessoris Opuscula* XI, PG 91:140A: “[τὴν ἀγιωτάτην Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίαν (...)] ὡς οὐδαμῶς μὲν κατισχυομένην (...) ὑπὸ ἄδου πυλῶν”.

20 In fact, Pope Honorius (625–638) was later condemned for his ‘improvident’ agreement with the *Psephos* of the emperor and the patriarch Sergios of Constantinople, by which they meant to stop any further discussion about monenergism: Honorius agreed that, be there one or two energies in Christ, there is only one will. Therefore he was later counted among the creators of monotheletism. Maximos may well have borne this case in mind, a case which was brought forward again in 1870 when the First Vatican Council discussed papal infallibility: Cf. Georg Kreuzer, *Die Honoriusfrage im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit* (Stuttgart, 1975).

preached.”²¹ Here he gives the definite hint where to look for the foundation of the holy “church of Romans”. It is not inherent in the pope’s person – in fact, Maximos is open to the idea of papal error – not in the Petrine tradition alone, and therefore not even necessarily in the city of Rome. Notably, in another passage of the trial acts Maximos says that even if the pope had failed, that would not harm synodal righteousness.²² Thus it is in the Spirit, the Apostles, the Fathers and the Councils where the true church can be found,²³ but there is no security that it is at one certain place in every historical situation. Against such background, a dichotomy between Eastern and Western churches as insinuated by his accusers can hardly be assumed in Maximos’ motives. A ‘Romans vs. Greeks’ perspective, in ecclesiological matters, therefore proves insufficient to explain his migration.

The same applies to the suggestion that Maximos’ affection for ‘the West’ could have been accompanied by a clear political position of which he was accused, namely in favour of two ‘Western’ usurpers against the ‘Eastern’ Empire. It has recently been argued that the “concurrence of his presence with significant expressions of political dissent against Constantinopolitan rule is too consistent to be coincidental”,²⁴ dissent engendered by the African exarch which is argued to having been “attempting to create nothing less than a separate state with an ideological underpinning” by Maximos and his circle.²⁵ In fact, the most substantial ‘source’ for this accusation in the high treason trial against Maximos is a dream. Reported via several middlemen, the point is made that he had dreamed one night in Rome that two groups of angels rose, one to the East, another one to the West, proclaiming Konstas II and the African exarch Gregorius as emperors respectively. Interestingly, the Western

21 *Relatio motionis* 7 (footnote 1), p. 62: “Τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον διὰ τοῦ Ἀποστόλου, καὶ ἀγγέλους ἀναθεματίζει παρὰ τὸ κήρυγμά τι καινοτομοῦντας”.

22 Larchet notes on the meaning of the Roman church for Maximos’ thought: “On notera d’ailleurs qu’il n’est pas fait mention ici du ‘Siège de Rome’ ni du ‘pape’ de Rome, mais de ‘l’Église des Romains’”: Larchet, *Maxime le Confesseur*, p. 159.

23 This is why Maximos in his post-649 letter from Rome is anxious to present the Lateran synod as an oecumenical council. See *Maximi Confessoris Opuscula* XI, PG 91, col. 137D: “[ἅγια δόγματα] καθὼς αἱ θεόληπτοι καὶ θεσπέσιοι εἰλικρινῶς καὶ πανευσεβῶς ἐξέθεντο ἅγιοι ἔξ σύνοδοι”. Cf. Catherine Cubitt, “The Lateran Council of 649 as an Ecumenical Council,” in *Chalcedon in Context. Church Councils 400–700*, ed. Richard Price and Mary Whitby (Liverpool, 2009), pp. 133–147.

24 Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 281.

25 Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 289. See also Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 152, in which Maximos is called his “spiritual and doctrinal advisor”.

angels are said to have been louder in Maximos' dream.²⁶ Besides the fact that the story seems clearly composed by the imperial accusers,²⁷ other evidence is too scarce to argue that Gregorius of Carthage – and, later, the exarch Olympios in Italy – was a proper usurper to the imperial throne. Needless to say, there is even less evidence that Maximos, though surely a consistent opponent of Constantinopolitan positions in matters of doctrine, actually wished for a Western Empire.²⁸

His migration was, therefore, not necessarily motivated by political reasons.²⁹ As said before, Maximos had come to Africa fleeing the Arabs, and through the connection with Sophronios and other Palestinian monks dwelling there. The steps of his migration rather seem to be decisions of individual scope, and should thus be viewed from the perspective of his personal network.

It is necessary to return here to our protagonist's biography. We don't know of any personal friend, or even of a visit of Maximos to Rome before 646. Nevertheless, he knew someone who had been there. As said before, he had met in Africa some ten years earlier Sophronios the Sophist, who would afterwards become patriarch of Jerusalem. It is possible that they had even known

26 See *Relatio motionis* 2 (footnote 1), p. 51: "Father Maximus had a vision in his sleep that in the heavens to the East and West there were crowds of angels. And the angels in the East shouted: 'Constantine Augustus, you shall conquer', whereas the angels in the West exclaimed: 'Gregory Augustus, you shall conquer.' And the voices of those in the West prevailed over those in the East." For a different assessment, see Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, pp. 307–309.

27 This becomes also clear from the fact that the dream reflects precise imperial terminology and ceremonial. Nonetheless, Brandes argues that this dream scene is a reinterpretation of Constantine's vision at the Milvian Bridge, constructed in Rome by Maximos, Pope Theodoros, and others: Wolfram Brandes, "'Juristische' Krisenbewältigung im 7. Jahrhundert? Die Prozesse gegen Papst Martin I. und Maximos Homologetes," *Fontes Minores* 10 (1998), 141–212, at 192. The concrete accusation against Maximos is the following: *Relatio motionis* 1 (note 1), p. 48: "Σὺ γὰρ μόνος Αἴγυπτον καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρειαν καὶ Πεντάπολιν καὶ Τρίπολιν καὶ Ἀφρικὴν Σαρακηνοῖς παραδέδωκας."

28 Booth can only assume this from "ambivalent attitude". See Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 309: "Indeed, as we have seen, Maximus and his master Sophronius had in the past demonstrated a marked ambivalence toward Heraclius and his household, and it would be unsurprising if he indeed went one step further and encouraged a simultaneous political rebellion against the heretical rule of Heraclius's successors."

29 Even the polemic, anti-Maximian Syriac *Life* argues that Maximos, though having retreated to a Palestinian monastery for some time in the 630s when his position seemed weak, did indeed travel to the West only when the Arabs approached Syria: cf. Brock, "Early Syriac Life," chapter 17, p. 317.

each other for years,³⁰ since they both were monks from the Palestinian desert. Indeed, Maximos would call him later “my blessed lord, father and master”.³¹ Sophronios was the man who fully introduced him to anti-monothelite theological resistance, and was the spiritual father of a group of monks who were leading the battle against the heresy.³² Sophronios himself had good contacts to Rome in our period: his legate Stephanos of Dor said that he had been to Rome three times between 634 and 649 on his behalf.³³ There the legate from Palestine met Pope Theodoros – who had either immigrated himself, or whose father had immigrated to Rome from Jerusalem,³⁴ and who in 648/49 prepared the anti-monothelite synod with Maximos until his death shortly before the event. A generation earlier, Sophronios had probably been in Rome himself, travelling with his friend Ioannes Moschos, who is justly seen as the ‘godfather’ of the network examined here.³⁵ There is more evidence of contacts and migration between Jerusalem and Rome in this period. For example, at the same

30 Cf. Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 149; Jankowiak, “Histoire politique du monothélisme,” pp. 103–104.

31 As we read in the Greek text: *S. Maximi Confessoris Epistolae*, Letter XIII [to Peter the Illustrious], PG 91, col. 533A: “Αὐτόθι γὰρ τὸν εὐλογημένον μου δεσπότην ἔχετε, Πατέρα τε καὶ διδάσκαλον κύριον ἀββάν Σωφρόνιον (..)”

32 Despite that, from his (polemic) Syriac *Life* one gets the impression that it was Maximos who in a way ‘radicalised’ Sophronios’ earlier thought on monenergism/monothelitism: cf. Brock, “Early Syriac Life,” chapters 6–8, pp. 315–316. Still, even there, their position is called “the doctrine of Sophronios and the rascal Maximos”: Brock, “Early Syriac Life,” chapter 15, p. 317.

33 Stephen of Dor relates his order by Sophronios to the Roman Synod in 649. See *Concilium Lateranense*, pp. 42–43: “ἐξ οὗ καὶ τρίτον ἤδη φαίνομαι τοῖς ἀποστολικοῖς ὑμῶν ἵχνεσι προσορμισθεῖς” (*a quo tempore tertio uisus sum uestris apostolicis adesse uestigiis*).

34 *Theodorus, natione Graecus, ex patre Theodoro episcopo, civitate Hierosolyma: Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Louis Duchesne, 3 vols, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1955), 1:331.

35 There has been a controversy about the historicity of Moschos’ and Sophronios’ journey to Rome. The relevant source is a prologue to Moschos’ *Spiritual Meadow*, edited by Hermann Usener, *Sonderbare Heilige: Texte und Untersuchungen* (Leipzig, 1907), pp. 91–93. The text implies a Roman journey of both of the monks and the death of Moschos in Rome. These facts were denied by Keetje Rozemond, “Jean Mosch, patriarche de Jérusalem en exil (614–634),” *Vigiliae christianae* 31 (1977), 60–67, and Enrica Follieri, “Dove e quando morì Giovanni Mosco?,” *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici* 25 (1988), 3–39. It is regarded possible, though, by Andrew Louth, “Did John Moschus Really Die in Constantinople?,” *Journal of Theological Studies* N.S. 49/1 (1998), 149–154. The controversy has lately been summarised by Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, pp. 106–108. Additional evidence (from an Arabic version of the *Spiritual Meadow*) supporting Moschos’ visit to Rome was brought forth by John M. McCulloh, “From Antiquity to the Middle Ages: Continuity and Change in Papal Relic Policy from the 6th to the 8th Century,” in *Pietas. Festschrift für*

time a monastic community from Syria or Anatolia came here carrying with them the head of the Persian martyr Anastasios, a Saint venerated in Palestine, accompanied by a manuscript from the hand of Modestos, Sophronios' predecessor as patriarch of Jerusalem.³⁶

Those are a lot of names, but what should have become clear is that Maximos did not need political or ecclesiological concepts to come to Rome – he just had to know some people. This reminds us of what we know about today's migration dynamics: almost nobody moves to another country or region without knowing anybody – or at least somebody who knows someone.³⁷ Humans usually migrate in networks, and this is probably what Maximos did. He moved along known routes, with the destinations of his migration depending on his personal network. Moreover, this does not negate the fact that Maximos' timing was influenced by other factors, like the Arab invasions, imperial action, or papal succession. Indeed, Maximos' actions in his battle against monotheletism seem constantly connected to places or people that he knew through his network. His dispute with Pyrrhos took place at Carthage, a city to which he had connections through Sophronios and other Palestinians. In 649, all non-Italian attendants to the Lateran synod were from places closely connected to Maximos' and Sophronios' biographies: Cyprus, where the latter had been with Ioannes Moschos;³⁸ and the monastery of Saint Theodosios in Palestine, "the monastic alma mater of Moschos and Sophronios".³⁹ There is enough reason to see the personal contacts of the Moschos-Sophronios circle,

Bernhard Kötting, ed. Ernst Dassmann and K. Suso Frank (Münster, 1980), pp. 313–324, at p. 316. This was apparently overlooked by Booth.

36 Cf. Carmela Vircillo Franklin, *The Latin Dossier of Anastasius the Persian: Hagiographic Translations and Transformations* (Toronto, 2004), pp. 70–74.

37 See, for example, Sonja Haug, "Migration Networks and Migration Decision-Making," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34/4 (2008), 585–605. Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen, "Discussion-Global Migration," *Journal of Global History* 6 (2011), pp. 299–307, favour "networks and agency, rather than push and pull", for historical analyses of migration motivation.

38 Ioannes Moschos and Sophronios had been to the island in 620 where they witnessed the burial of their friend Ioannes the Almsgiver. If we believe the Syriac *Life* of Maximos, Sophronios returned to Cyprus in the 630s together with Anastasios, the disciple of Maximos, whereas the latter is said to have refused the invitation. Cf. Brock, "Early Syriac Life," chapters 8–11, pp. 315–316; Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, pp. 100–101 and pp. 239–241. Cyprus was also the home of a recurrent addressee of Maximos' letters, Marinos.

39 See Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 297. According to the prologue of the *Spiritual Meadow*, Moschos was buried here by Sophronios: *Sonderbare Heilige*, p. 93 (footnote 32). Among the non-Italian participants of the 649 synod, to the bishop of Cyprus and the monks from St. Theodosios, Stephanos of Dora has to be added, Sophronios' personal fellow.

which connected Rome to several other places in the Mediterranean, as influential to Maximos' travels and action.⁴⁰

The Network of Maximos the Confessor

I have called the personal contacts of Maximos a network. The term is admittedly a buzzword, but still can be used for good reasons.⁴¹ To illustrate this point, let us have a look on what constituted a migration network in the mid-seventh century and how it functioned. It is important to bear in mind that a network should not be understood as an acting entity, but rather as a kind of structural potential or social capital which enables action by its members.

The contacts listed so far centre on Maximos and his teacher Sophronios. If one includes Ioannes Moschos, who was in turn Sophronios' fatherly friend, and Anastasios, a close companion to Maximos over decades, arrested and tried with him but exiled separately, one can call this network 'intergenerational'. In fact, the protagonists appear in a sequence of master-disciple relationships. Still we are entitled to call it Maximos' personal network, as we are looking at migration and interaction from his perspective.⁴² Then again, the

40 Similar dynamics are compellingly proven by Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, pp. 152–155, for the network's protagonists' earlier migration in the context nobility networks.

41 For this, see Claire Lemerrier, "Formale Methoden der Netzwerkanalyse in den Geschichtswissenschaften: Warum und Wie?," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* 23/1 (2012), 16–41. Lemerrier summarises the potential of, and answers some of the critique towards, historical social network analysis. She describes it as an approach to the understanding of social connections, not so much aiming at revealing the actors' strategies than their potential and constraints for social action. Types of ties, their character and temporal limits should be made clear. Network-based approaches to Byzantium are currently tried in the COMMED project in Vienna: <http://www.oeaw.ac.at/imafo/die-abteilungen/byzanzforschung/communities-landscapes/historische-geographie/komplexitaet-netzwerke/>. See also some of the articles in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. Cécile Morrisson (Washington, D.C., 2012). Among Western Medievalists, seventh-century networks have recently been described by Courtney Luckhardt, "Gender and Connectivity: Facilitating Religious Travel in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries," *Comitatus* 44 (2013), 29–53. Another recent example for the advantages of network approaches to medieval history is Benjamin Scheller, *Die Stadt der Neuchristen. Konvertierte Juden und ihre Nachkommen im Trani des Spätmittelalters zwischen Inklusion und Exklusion* (Berlin, 2013).

42 Booth calls parts of this network "the Moschan circle [...] after its most senior member": Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 4. In fact, the monks of the North African monastery where Sophronios and Maximos met (again?) were called by the latter *Eukratades*, which is

term network implies something more complex than a mere series of spiritual descendants. Indeed, on the basis of ‘who had personal contacts to whom?’ we can in this case draw a network that is fairly complex, and entwines not only generations, but also different places in a more than linear manner. We find multiple and overlapping contacts as well as indirect connections. The medium through which this network was established, and therefore the main source for its analysis, is a corpus of letters written by its members to others living at the intersections of this network. As Phil Booth has proven recently, the anti-monothelite movement was in large part a monastic one.⁴³ It is unsurprising, therefore, that several letters are addressed to communities of fellow brethren, rather than to individuals.

Our case gives us the opportunity to analyse the dynamics of such a network, even without the dominance of one central character. This opportunity comes with the exile of Maximos and his closest disciples as well as Pope Martinus. Once the protagonists had been exiled to the outmost edges of the empire, the network had to prove its durability and ability to maintain interconnectivity. Maximos’ network is particularly interesting in this regard, since the question of its durability has in fact puzzled historians. Notably, in the sixth Oecumenical Council in 680/81, there are almost no traces of his disciples. Rome, too, was now willing to come to terms with the emperor. It has been argued recently that after the death of Martinus’ successor Eugenius in 657 there had been some kind of agreement on silence over matters of monothelitism between Rome and Constantinople in the meantime.⁴⁴ That would mean that strict anti-monothelite utterances like Maximos’, which seem to have provoked much of the controversy in the first place,⁴⁵ were particularly inopportune in the 660s and 670s. Nonetheless, there is evidence from the network’s next generation, enough, in fact, to analyse some of its characteristics.

Maximos was brought to the Georgian Black Sea coast where he eventually died in 662. In this critical situation – the pope as well as Maximos and his two closest disciples were exiled to different cities on the eastern edge of

explained with an epithet or name of Ioannes Moschos, Ioannes Eukrates: Christoph von Schönborn, *Sophrone de Jérusalem. Vie monastique et confession dogmatique* (Paris, 1972), p. 75.

43 Booth’s book brilliantly reveals the particular association of ascetic and ecclesiastic elements in the circle’s thought.

44 Jankowiak, “Histoire politique du monothélisme,” pp. 327–335, 361–369, 395–398. On the Church of Rome under Eugene, see *ibid.*, pp. 289–310. In his conclusion at p. 525, Jankowiak states that Martin and Maximos “moururent en exil et dans l’oubli”.

45 See above, note 6.

the empire – their network was not interrupted. On the contrary, the letters of all of its members reveal great effort by them and others to keep the network alive. Men from Jerusalem, Rome, but also Constantinople, Askalon,⁴⁶ Sardinia, and the Black Sea provinces were not only writing each other, they were also spreading the memory of their exiled heroes. All around the Mediterranean, it seems, there were monastic communities praying for other monks, a commemoration that was actively encouraged and asked for in the letters. It therefore seems that some sort of spiritual attention was its principal aim, not only for the exiled, but also for other groups in the network.

Nevertheless, it seems that it did not only function in this rather ‘conservative’ manner. New contacts were also integrated into the network: Thus, Anastasios Apokrisiarios – another exiled fellow of Maximos – recommends to others who are willing to visit him at the house of a local commander, who was responsible for him during his transport into exile and apparently treated him well. He is said to be a God-loving man, and willing to house other monks travelling to the particular region. His home is even called “a place truly fitting for monks” (*in loco monachos veraciter condecete*), which sounds like an invitation or traveller’s advice. The commander and his family, living on the north-eastern edge of Asia Minor, are counted among the just and good,⁴⁷ and even called “true sons and brothers of the church of Jerusalem”⁴⁸ in another letter – thus clearly considering them as new members of this network of visits and commemoration.

Furthermore, several younger people from Jerusalem and Constantinople – men who had not known Maximos personally – travelled to the Crimea and Georgia to visit the expatriate spiritual fathers. In one of his letters Anastasios Apokrisiarios mentions one “Stephanus”, a cleric’s son from Jerusalem, “*veni-*

46 There is a letter of Anastasios Apokrisiarios “πρὸς μοναχοὺς Ἀσκαλωνίτας” in codex *Vaticanus Graecus* 662, still unedited (only a small part is edited by Jean-Paul Migne, in *Patrologia Graeca* 89, cols 1191–1192A) and only known for its patristic quotations to date. Winkelmann dates it to 665–666: Winkelmann, *Der monenergetisch-monotheletische Streit*, p. 152–154.

47 The *Letter of Anastasius to Theodore of Gangra*, ed. Allen/Neil (n. 1), 11, p. 144 calls him “τὸν πανεύφημον καὶ θεοφύλακτον πατρίκιον καὶ σὺν Θεῷ μάγιστρον”. The Latin quote can be found in par. 7, p. 140 (only parts of the original Greek letter survived).

48 See *Letter of Anastasius to Theodore of Gangra* 8, p. 140: *Obsecro autem sanctissimos uos eadem pro ipsis postulare in sanctis orationibus uestris, et maxime cum in sanctis et colendis oraueritis. Digni quippe sunt quibus haec prestatitis. Filii enim germani existunt sanctae Christi Dei nostri Anastaseos.*

On the identification of the church mentioned with that of Jerusalem, see *ibid.* p. 42 (note 174).

entem in hanc regionem".⁴⁹ Yet the best examples are probably Theodosios of Gangra and Theodoros Spoudaios, two brothers from Jerusalem who "made the long trek to the Caucasus"⁵⁰ to look for Pope Martinus and Anastasios Apokrisiarios, who had requested their spiritual and material help. It is these young men who organized the memory of the exiles: Theodoros Spoudaios is the assumed writer of the *Commemoration*, an account of the trials and fate of Martinus, Maximos, and others.⁵¹ The network spent quite a bit of ink and travel expenses, but it managed to stay alive and even to embed another, younger generation.

It is furthermore evident in the letters that, besides keeping alive traditional connections and incorporating new ones, the network was also able to establish new contacts between its actual members. For example, one of the letters of Anastasios, the disciple of Maximos, is addressed to a monastery in Sardinia. He pleads with the monks to sail to Rome and support the brothers there, as they have always been strong and just: "*Si possibile est vos transire [quaerimus] citius, quasi alia pro causa, ad senioris Romae pios et firmos ut petram viros, qui videlicet vobiscum tutores nostri sunt semper.*"⁵² It becomes clear that the Roman and the Sardinian friends of Anastasios did not know each other yet when the letter was penned. Nevertheless, they are recommended to each other on the basis of their respective close relationships to the sender of the letter. What we can observe here is what in terms of network theory would be called increasing density: the number of direct contacts – as opposed to indirect ones – increases.

Therefore, the network does not seem to have ceased at all with the exile and death of its protagonist. On the contrary, it was not only trying, capably, to maintain the contacts, but it also sought to intensify them, to embed new members to the network, and to increase its density. The network perspective shows that even after the exile of the protagonists of anti-monotheletism – and maybe

49 *Letter of Anastasius to Theodore of Gangra* 8, p. 140. The editors identify this Stephen with Stephen of Dor, but all that is given from the text is that he was from Jerusalem.

50 See *Maximus the Confessor and his Companions*, pp. 21–22.

51 Cf. *Maximus the Confessor and his Companions*, pp. 41–43; For the *Commemoration*, see *ibid.*, pp. 148–170. Another, anonymous, text from this generation is the letter *Against the People of Constantinople*, *ibid.*, pp. 172–174. Theodore also compiled a larger dossier on Martin, the *Narrations*: cf. Booth, *Crisis of Empire*, p. 203.

52 See *Letter of Anastasius to the monks of Cagliari*, 5, p. 128. See also Maria Corona Corrias, "Il ruolo delle Chiesa caralitana tra Oriente e Occidente nella lettera di Anastasio discepolo di Massimo il Confessore (VII secolo)," in *La Sardegna paleocristiana tra Eusebio e Gregorio Magno. Atti del Convegno Nazionale di studi, Cagliari 10–12 ottobre 1996*, ed. Attilio Mastino, Giovanna Sotgio, and Natalino Spaccapel (Cagliari, 1999).

even after the papacy turned its back to this resistance –⁵³ they relied on established connections to attempt further implication of individuals and communities in Rome, Palestine and other places all around the Mediterranean.

Conclusion

We started from the question of the place of Rome in the seventh-century empire, and the value of large-scale narratives. We seem to end with detailed questions as to who wrote to whom. What, therefore, might we conclude from the exercise?

The network perspective differs from ‘large-scale narratives’ in that it tries to trace the meaning of individual social networks for the historical actors’ reflection of, and action in, a Mediterranean context. Migrants’ networks are especially interesting as immigrants connect places and spaces traditionally perceived as separate, and have therefore the potential to establish and maintain long-reaching networks, as the cases of other Greek-speaking immigrants to Rome show. The case of Maximos and his circle has proven that migration itself did not necessarily reflect ideas of different cultures, churches, or politics. From Maximos’ reserved and historically conditioned image of Rome and the papacy we can learn that too strong emphasis on familiar entities with familiar characteristics does not have to be a migrant’s perspective. Social history of individuals and smaller groups, like the network approach, allows a different perspective on which factors influenced migration and thus interaction in the seventh-century Mediterranean.

The network investigated here has proven to be influential in the decision of where to go and whom to contact in a new environment, but also to be a flexible structure connecting people across almost all of the Mediterranean – Rome, Palestine, Constantinople, Africa, Sardinia, and the Black Sea – and over several generations. The question of the Byzantine courtier to Maximos – “Why do you love the Romans and hate the Greeks?” – aims at a clear distinction between two poles, constructed in a highly polemic context. Maximos’ answer – “I love the Romans for being of the same faith, and I love the Greeks for being of the same language” – reveals the opinion of a man who, from a migrant’s perspective, would find the in-between and the long-ranging connection more fitting than any distinction between East and West.

53 See above, note 44.

Rus' Dynastic Ideology in the Frescoes of the South Chapels in St. Sophia, Kiev

Sarah C. Simmons

Introduction*

The influence of Byzantine material culture in Kievan Rus' after its conversion to Christianity in 988 is apparent in the appropriation of imperial costume and regalia, church decoration, and architecture. Scholars have acknowledged the continuation of certain aspects of Rus' style and iconography after 988, but nevertheless have approached Kievan Rus' as a peripheral state that imitated the visual and ceremonial languages of Constantinople.¹ I propose a

* This paper is part of a larger chapter from my forthcoming dissertation "Rjurik Dynastic Ideology in the Art of Medieval Rus', 988–1125." I would like to thank the Oxford University Byzantine Society for their warm hospitality and insightful questions and comments at the 2014 International Graduate Conference. I thank my co-chairs, Lynn Jones and Robert Romanchuk, for their suggestions and guidance on this paper. I greatly appreciate Christopher Timm and Brad Hostetler for their comments on previous drafts of this paper. I am grateful to the National Conservation Area and the St. Sophia Museum staff for providing research materials and photograph permissions.

1 Scholars attribute aspects of St. Sophia's architectural style to Rus' or other non-Byzantine sources including the two western façade towers and the elongated domes. See Olexa Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev* (New York, 1954), pp. 35–36; Hrihoriy Lohvin, *Kiev's Hagia Sophia: State Architectural-Historical Monument* (Kiev, 1971), pp. 8–9. The extent to which scholars believe the Rus' imitated Byzantine style in the visual arts varies. Ihor Ševčenko states that Rus church decoration was a slavish imitation of Byzantine sources, while more recently Elena Boeck, limiting her analysis to the hippodrome murals, asserts that Kiev does not try to replicate Constantinopolitan culture but appropriated Byzantine visual representations of power for their own purposes: Ihor Ševčenko, *Byzantium and the Slavs: In Letters and Culture* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991), p. 165; Elena Boeck, "Simulating the Hippodrome: The Performance of Power in Kiev's St. Sophia," *The Art Bulletin* 91/3 (2009), p. 295. Scholars have focused their study of St. Sophia's mosaics and frescoes on those located in the nave and crossing. Viktor Lazarev has made important observations regarding Jaroslav's family portrait above the west entrance and the frescoes in the crossing and gallery. He presents a strong analysis of the frescoes but he relies on Byzantine models of iconography that limit the frescoes' range of possible interpretations: Viktor Lazarev and

study of St. Sophia in Kiev within the local political context. By approaching St. Sophia's decorative program through the lens of its patron, the Grand Prince Jaroslav I (r.1019–1054), I suggest the monument and its array of saints and narrative scenes come into better focus. A comprehensive study of Jaroslav's St. Sophia will demonstrate how the decorative program served political ideology. I argue that as a new Orthodox prince, Jaroslav did not build his state church to slavishly imitate Byzantine church decoration, but to present himself through a new Rus' Orthodox visual language as the recipient of divine providence in his own right. I do not intend to suggest a reconstruction of lost frescoes but rather to focus on the choice and arrangement of surviving scenes. My focus on political and dynastic themes does not preclude other possible interpretations of the decorative program, but demonstrates the multiple levels of meaning.

A. A. Beletsky, *Мозаики Софии Киевской* [*Mosaics of Saint Sophia in Kiev*] (Moscow, 1960); Viktor Lazarev, *Old Russian Murals and Mosaics: From the XI to the XVI Century* (London, 1966); idem, *Византийское и древнерусское искусство* [*Byzantine and Old Russian Art*] (Moscow, 1978); idem, *Studies in Early Russian Art* (London, 2000), pp. 355–426. See also Andrzej Poppe, "The Building of the Church of St. Sophia in Kiev," *Journal of Medieval History* 7/1 (1981), 39–44; Andrzej Poppe, "The Christianization and Ecclesiastical Structure of Kyivan Rus' to 1300," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 21/3–4 (1997), 334–335. Nadia Nikitenko has made a series of controversial claims on the identification and meaning of many aspects of St. Sophia's fresco program: Nadia Nikitenko, *Sobor Svyatoy Sofii v Kieve* (Moscow, 2008). For a more recent source on St. Sophia's frescoes, see: Olga Popova, "Image and Style in the Mosaics of St. Sophia," in *Byzantium in the Context of World Culture, Proceedings from the Conference Dedicated to the Memory of Alisa Vladimirovna Bank, 1906–1984*, ed. by the State Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, 2010), pp. 386–419; Alexei Komech, *История русского искусства* [*History of Russian Art*] (Moscow, 2007); Nadezhda Gerasimenko et al., "Изображения Святых во Фресках Софии Киевской. Часть I: Внутренние Галереи [Images of the Saints in the Frescoes of Saint Sophia. Part I: Interior Gallery]," *Византийский Временник* [*Byzantina Xronika*] 66/91 (2007), 24–59; Vladimir Sarabianov et al., "Изображения святых во фресках Софии Киевской. Западное пространство основного ебэта под хорами [Images of Saints in the Frescoes of Saint Sophia. West of the Main Space under the Gallery]," *Искусство Христианского мира* [*Art of the Christian World*] 11 (2009), 208–256; Vladimir Sarabianov, "Реликвии и Образы Святых в Сакральном Пространстве Софии Киевской [Relics and Images of Saints in the Sacred Space of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev]," in *Spatial Icons: Performativity in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. Alexei Lidov (Moscow, 2011): 364–392; Nadezhda Gerasimenko et al., "Изображения Святых на Хорах Собора Св. Софии в Киеве. Новые Атрибуции [Images of Saints in the Choirs of Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev. New Attributions]," *Византийский Временник* [*Byzantina Xronika*] 73/98 (2014): 219–236; Scholarship is beginning to revise its assessment of St. Sophia as a provincial imitation of Byzantine churches. Nevertheless, a study of St. Sophia's frescoes as a complete program reflecting the power and interests of its patron, Jaroslav, has not been completed.

Jaroslav was born into the Rjurik dynasty as the son of Grand Prince Vladimir I (r.980–1015).² As part of a diplomatic agreement with Emperor Basileios II (r.976–1025), Vladimir converted to Christianity in order to marry the Byzantine Porphyrogenita, Anna.³ In 1010 Vladimir appointed Jaroslav as the prince of Novgorod, the second seat of power in the Rus' principality.⁴ Upon Vladimir's death in 1015, a four-year civil war broke out among his sons.⁵ Though Jaroslav defeated his brother Svjatopolk in battle and successfully took the Kievan throne in 1019, he remained on the defensive against threats from his surviving brothers.⁶ He reached a tentative two-year truce with his older brother Mstislav, whose death in 1036 finally secured Jaroslav's title as the Grand Prince of all Rus' lands.⁷

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- 2 The identity of Jaroslav's mother is debated. Franklin and Shepard suggest she is Vladimir's first wife, Rogneda of Polotsk (b.962–1002). Simon Franklin and Jonathan Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus, 750–1200* (London, 1996), pp. 179–80. Jaroslav was born while his father ruled as a pagan prince. When Jaroslav assumed the throne of Kiev as a Christian city, he could benefit from asserting Orthodox Anna Porphyrogenita as his dynastic mother. For a brief discussion of Vladimir's pagan rule, see Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, pp. 155–156.
 - 3 Basileios II offered his sister in marriage in exchange for Vladimir's promise to send military support for the emperor's campaigns against the rebellion led by Bardas Phokas. Scholars disagree on the means by which Basileios fulfilled the marriage agreement. Franklin and Shepard suggest that Vladimir attacked Cherson in 988 to pressure the emperor who had not fulfilled his part of the agreement: Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, p. 162. Andrzej Poppe offers a different perspective on the events. He argues that Basil ordered Vladimir to capture Cherson. Basileios then rewarded Vladimir by facilitating his marriage to Anna: Andrzej Poppe, "Christianization and Ecclesiastical Structure," pp. 320–322, 325–326. Whether the marriage occurred under contentious conditions or not, Vladimir's baptism and subsequent marriage to Anna provided the prince with the tools necessary to strengthen his claim to power at home and abroad.
 - 4 Wladyslaw Duczko, *Viking Rus: Studies on the Presence of Scandinavians in Eastern Europe* (Leiden, 2004), p. 234.
 - 5 Svjatopolk implemented a plan to murder his surviving brothers to secure his hold on power. He successfully killed Boris and Gleb, whose murders later emerged as the Cult of ss Boris and Gleb. For the cult of ss Boris and Gleb see Gail Lenhoff, *The Martyred Princes Boris and Gleb: A Socio-Cultural Study of the Cult and the Texts* (Columbus, 1989). Meanwhile, Jaroslav prepared his armies and marched to Kiev to take his father's throne: Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, pp. 184–185.
 - 6 Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, pp. 187–188.
 - 7 His death is attributed to a hunting accident. Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, pp. 187–188.

In 1037 Jaroslav began construction on his church, St. Sophia in Kiev.⁸ The church received royal funds and served as the Metropolitan's seat.⁹ St. Sophia was located near one of the prince's palaces.¹⁰ This church was the second masonry structure built in Kievan Rus', preceded by his father's now-lost palatine Church of the Dormition, which was half the size of Jaroslav's church.¹¹ The dedication of St. Sophia to Holy Wisdom likely emulates that of Hagia

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- 8 Scholars continue to debate the year construction began on St. Sophia in Kiev on account of two dates recorded in the *First Novgorod Chronicle* (1017) and the *Primary Chronicle* (1037). See *The Chronicle of Novgorod*, trans. Robert Mitchell and Neville Forbes (London, 1914), p. 2; *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian Text*, ed. and trans. Samuel Hazzard Cross and Olgerd P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), p. 137. I follow Andrzej Poppe's dating to 1036. His analysis of travel accounts and the military history of Kiev challenges Hrihoriy Lohvin's previous dating of the church to 1017. Andrzej Poppe, "The Building of St. Sophia in Kiev," pp. 15–66. For Lohvin's dating see Hrihoriy Lohvin, "On the Construction of the Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Kiev," *Ukrainian Historical Journal* 2 (1987), 129–136. Boeck has argued against Nikitenko's more recent attempts to revive the 1017 dating that uses graffiti found on Kiev Sophia's walls: Elena Boeck, "Believing is Seeing: Princess Spotting in St. Sophia in Kiev," in *Dubitando: Studies in History and Culture in Honor of Donald Ostrowski*, ed. Brian J. Boeck, Russell E. Martin, and Daniel Rowland (Bloomington, 2012), pp. 167–179; and Nadia N. Nikitenko and Viacheslav V. Kornienko, "Eschatological Dates in Graffiti on the Frescoes of St. Sophia Cathedral as Historical Source," in *Archives of Ukraine* 6 (2009): 43–63.
- 9 See Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, p. 210. St. Sophia in Kiev originally stood within a walled complex that also included the Metropolitan's residence. St. Sophia's dual function as an emblem of church and state finds similarities with Hagia Sophia's status in Constantinople. In Kiev, the church remained economically dependent on the prince who annually donated ten percent of his wealth to the complex. "The prince's residence remained where it had been before, but his authority moved outwards with the Church, a presence in signs and symbols rather than in domicile": Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, p. 210. Jaroslav's family portrait located above the church's western entrance served as a visual reminder of the church's patron.
- 10 Foundations of a possible princely palace are located approximately 100 metres south of Saint Sophia. For an overview of the archaeological surveys of central Kiev, see Oleg M. Ioannisyan, "Archeological Evidence for the Development and Urbanization of Kiev from the 8th to the 14th centuries," in *From the Baltic to the Black Sea: Studies in Medieval Archeology*, ed. David Austin and Leslie Alcock (London, 1990), pp. 285–312.
- 11 For plans and dimensions, see Ioannisyan, "Archeological Evidence," pp. 288, 295. The church of the Dormition, or also known as the Tithe Church, was built between 989 and 996 near Vladimir's palace. The church was destroyed during the Mongol invasion in 1240: Ioannisyan, "Archeological Evidence," p. 288. Andrzej Poppe argues that the church functioned as Vladimir's palatine chapel: Poppe, "The Building of St. Sophia in Kiev," pp. 24–26.

Sophia in Constantinople, but in architectural form and decoration, St. Sophia and Hagia Sophia differ significantly.¹² St. Sophia's mosaics and frescoes provided an opportunity for the prince, who commissioned Byzantine artists to complete the interior, to proclaim his power.¹³

An overview of St. Sophia's layout and decorative program is important for understanding the ways in which the church functions as a dynastic monument. Jaroslav's church is a complicated structure. The church's interior features a central apse, a central nave, and four subsidiary apses and aisles (Fig. 13.1).¹⁴ The apse mosaics depict a Theotokos Orans in the conch, the Apostles receiving communion from Christ in the middle register, and images of the Church Fathers in the lowest register. The nave and crossing feature frescoes depicting scenes from the life of Christ. Jaroslav's donor and family portrait is located above the west entrance, facing the eastern apse. It is worth noting that scholars have focused on interpretations of St. Sophia's mosaics, the crossing frescoes, and the donor and family portrait.¹⁵

Conversely, the frescoes located in the subsidiary apses, traditionally called chapels, have received little scholarly attention.¹⁶ Each chapel contains

¹² Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, p. 210.

¹³ The idea that Basileios II sent Byzantine craftsmen to Jaroslav has shaped the way scholars view Kiev Sophia's decoration and Byzantine-Rus' relations of the period. See Otto Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West* (New York, 1970), 121. Christian Raffensperger proposes an alternative perspective in which Constantinople sent its best artisans west for higher payment, thereby leaving lesser-qualified craftsmen to make the long journey north: Christian Raffensperger, *Reimagining Europe: Kievan Rus' in the Medieval World* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012), pp. 41–42.

¹⁴ For images of the frescoes and mosaics not reproduced in this article, see Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev*; and Lohvin, *Kiev's Hagia Sophia*.

¹⁵ For work on Saint Sophia's apse mosaics and crossing frescoes see Lazarev, *Old Russian Murals and Mosaics*; idem, *Византийское и древнерусское искусство* [*Byzantine and Old Russian Art*]; and Alexei Komech, *История русского искусства* [*History of Russian Art*]. For a state of the literature on the family portrait prior to 1956, see Viktor Lazarev, "New Data on the Mosaics and Frescoes of the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev: I and II," pp. 386–426. More recent bibliography is included in Andrzej Poppe, "The Building of the Church of St. Sophia in Kiev" and S. A. Vysotskii, "Ktitorskaia freska Iaroslava Mudrogo v Kievskoi Sofii," in *Drevnerusskoe iskusstvo: Khudozhestvennaia kul'tura X-pervoi poloviny XIII v.*, ed. A. I. Komech and O. I. Podobedova (Moscow, 1988), pp. 120–133.

¹⁶ Nikitenko has published many studies of St. Sophia's frescoes, but she has not presented a cohesive interpretation of the decorative program and her conclusions are supported by controversial claims. Otherwise, the fresco program located in the subsidiary chapels and aisles have received only cursory attention. Lohvin describes and identifies scenes in the chapel and aisles in his publication intended for general audiences. However, these

narrative scenes, and corresponds to an aisle consisting of a crossing bay with two additional square bays featuring half- and full-length images of saints.¹⁷ Unlike St. Sophia's mosaics, not all frescoes feature a naming inscription; identification instead relies on the context and juxtaposition of images. The northernmost chapel is dedicated to Saint George (I) and features scenes from the saint's life and martyrdom (roman numerals indicate location on the plan in Figure 13.1).¹⁸ The adjacent Chapel of ss Peter and Paul features scenes from the life of St. Peter (II).

In this paper I focus on the frescoes in the southern chapels and the ways in which they construct and convey Jaroslav's dynastic ideology. The southernmost chapel is dedicated to the archangel Michael (IV). The apse conch features a half-length portrait of Michael clothed in a tunic and *loros*. He wears a diadem on his nimbed head, holds an orb in his left hand and a cruciform staff in his right. Below the conch are six unnamed Church Fathers. The chapel's eastern vault features two surviving narrative scenes that also feature Michael: Jacob wrestling the Archangel (IV-A), and Michael's expulsion of Satan from Heaven (IV-B). The adjacent vault to the west features representations of the appearance of Michael to Joshua (IV-C), Zechariah (IV-D), and Balaam (IV-E).¹⁹ An image of Constantine and Helena flanking the Cross is located on the south wall adjacent to the church's original south entrance (IV-F) (Fig. 13.2).²⁰ Constantine wears the Y-shaped *loros* and a *stemma*

decorative programs do not feature in scholars' more detailed analyses of the church. Lohvin, *Kiev's Hagia Sophia: State Architectural-Historical Monument*.

17 Hereafter, when I refer to a chapel's aisle I am discussing the two bays west of the crossing bay.

18 The roman numerals refer to the notation system on the accompanying plan. See the plan's key to identify a chapel or fresco's location in the church.

19 A fourth scene in the vault has been heavily restored and will thus not be considered in this study. The National Conservation Area of Saint Sophia, Kyiv identifies the scene as Hagar's vision of the archangel (Genesis 16: 9–11). If this restoration reflects the original fresco program, then the scene also portrays the theme of theophany and refers to the foundation of the line of Ishmael.

20 The figures of Constantine and Helena by the south entrance has received little scholarly attention. To my knowledge, Helena's presence in the fresco has not been noted in the scholarship. She is only partially extant – her hand holding the Cross, the lower half of her robes and her shoes can still be seen. This fresco depicts standard Byzantine iconography for representing Constantine and Helena. Lohvin labels the emperor as unidentified in his *Kiev's Hagia Sophia: State Architectural-Historical Monument* (Figure 198); he does not discuss the image. Lazarev also does not mention the imperial fresco in his monograph on Russian murals, *Old Russian Murals and Mosaics*. Byzantine decorative programs featuring Constantine and Helena flanking the Cross at primary or ceremonial entrances

with *pendilia*. This costume departs from imperial fashions featuring the T-shaped *loros*, as represented in the contemporary image of Konstantinos Monomachos in Hagia Sophia.²¹

The first chapel south of the main apse is dedicated to ss Joachim and Anna (III). Narrative scenes on the chapel's apse represent the life of Saint Anna and the Theotokos.²² The south wall of the chapel features the Theotokos's Presentation at the Temple and her reception of the purple and wool to weave a veil for the Temple altar (III-A). The aisle bay to the west of the crossing

are common. For a discussion of depictions of Constantine and Helena in Byzantine Churches, including Hosios Loukas, see Carolyn L. Connor, *Women of Byzantium* (New Haven, CT, 2004), pp. 192–204. A contemporary example includes a mosaic of the imperial pair located above the south entrance in the narthex of Hosios Loukas. El Nazar in Cappadocia features Constantine and Helena in the vault above the west entrance. See Marcel Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor* (New York, 1967), pp. 1:28–30, 1:101–103, and 2: figs. 13–15. Constantine and Justinian are located above the south entrance of the narthex in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. See Thomas Whittemore, *The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul, second preliminary report work done in 1933 and 1934, the mosaics of the southern vestibule* (Paris, 1936) and Robin Cormack, "The Emperor at St. Sophia: Viewer and Viewed," in *Byzance et les images: Cycle de Conférences organisé au musée du Louvre par le Service culturel du 5 octobre au 7 décembre 1992*, eds Jannic Durand and André Guillou (Paris, 1994), pp. 223–253. In 1045 Jaroslav's son, Vladimir Jaroslavich, began construction on a church dedicated to St. Sophia in Novgorod. A fresco beside the south entrance also features Constantine and Helena holding the cross. See Dmitry Likhachov, "The Culture of Novgorod," in *Novgorod: Art Treasures and Architectural Monuments, 11th–18th centuries* (Leningrad, 1984), p. 7 and fig. 27. Of particular interest is why the decorative program in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople does not feature Constantine and Helena. The procession recorded in the *Book of Ceremonies* as the emperor enters into Hagia Sophia conveys the ritual negotiation of imperial and patriarchal power within the church. The absence of imperial imagery beyond donor portraits in Hagia Sophia signifies the tempered power of the emperor in this space. The unidentified emperor shown in *proskynesis* in the narthex mosaic reinforces this view. See Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *Book of Ceremonies*, 1.1, eds Ann Moffatt and Maxeme Tall (Canberra, 2012), pp. 5–35; and Nicolas Oikonomides, "Leo VI and the Narthex Mosaic of St. Sophia," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 30 (1976), 151 and 153–172. In contrast, St. Sophia in Kiev overtly emphasizes a royal presence in the Metropolitan's church by featuring repeated images of Constantine and Helena.

21 For a discussion of this mosaic see Henry Maguire, "Style and Ideology in Byzantine Imperial Art," *Gesta* 28:2 (1989), 228.

22 Beginning on the top right, the apse features Anna's prayer to end her barrenness, Anna and Joachim's meeting at the Golden Gate, the birth of the Theotokos, her betrothal, the annunciation to Anna, the annunciation to the Theotokos, and the Visitation.

features two saints, Constantine the Great and Saint Eustace.²³ Constantine, depicted on the southeast pier (III-B), wears a *stemma*, tunic, and the imperial Y-shaped *loros* (Fig. 13.3). Facing Constantine on the southwest pier (III-C) is an image of Eustace wearing Byzantine court costume and holding a martyr's cross in his right hand. In the adjacent bay to the west, Helena is depicted on the southeast pier (III-D). She is depicted wearing a cross-inscribed T-shaped *loros*, tunic, and *stemma*.²⁴ Facing Helena is an image of a female martyr on the southwestern pier (III-E).²⁵ She is depicted wearing a *maphorion* and tunic, and holds a cross in her right hand.

Chapel of the Archangel Michael

On one level, the fresco program of the Chapel of the Archangel Michael functioned to convey God's protection of the Rus' principality through the agency of the Archangel Michael.²⁶ I suggest that it also served another function, to portray Jaroslav as the divinely-sanctioned heir and thus legitimize his rise to

23 The placement of the emperor across from Saint Eustace, whose conversion stories share similar themes, and near the figure of St. Helena suggests that the figure is Constantine. Lohvin identifies the figure as Solomon without a supporting argument in *Sobor Svâtoi Sofii v Kyévi* (Kyiv, 2001), figure 217. The identification of the figure of Eustace requires further iconographical analysis.

24 This is the same costume featured in contemporary Byzantine representations of the saint, represented in the 11th-century mosaic of Constantine and Helena in the narthex of Hosios Loukas.

25 Nikitenko identifies the figure as "Martyr Anna" in *Sobor Sviatoi Sofii v Kieve*, p. 208. She does not provide evidence for her identification of the martyr Anna, which remains problematic and warrants a reassessment at a later date. What is important about the space for my purposes is how the fresco program works together with the Constantine and Eustace bay to present a cohesive celebration of Jaroslav's dynastic parentage.

26 Smiljka Gabelić has identified two types of fresco cycles of the Archangels featured in Orthodox decorative programs. These include the concise cycle, featuring two to three scenes, and the extended cycle, featuring up to 68 scenes. These scenes originate from the Old and New Testaments and apocryphal and ecclesiastical texts. There is not a standardized fresco cycle of the Archangel Michael – patrons rely on the same textual sources for a cycle's visual content; however, the specific scenes chosen varies by patron. Thus it remains important to perceive the decorative program featured in Chapel of the Archangel Michael in St. Sophia as participating within an Orthodox visual tradition but also as a program designed for its specific space. For a summary of texts and fresco cycles of the Archangels in Byzantine art see Smiljka Gabelić, *Cycles of the Archangels in Byzantine Art* (Belgrade, 1991) and Gabelić, *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Cycles of the Archangels, 11th to 18th Century* (Belgrade, 2004).

power. The fresco featuring the expulsion of Satan (IV-B) underscores the triumph of Christianity over false belief.²⁷ Michael, enclosed in a yellow sphere representing the heavens, stands in a frontal pose as he casts out Satan's diminutive and contorted body. This choice of iconography serves as an apt parallel to Vladimir's campaign to extinguish paganism from his lands – legends tell of Vladimir's orders to throw pagan idols in the Dnieper and mass forced baptisms.²⁸ Michael's imperial costume in the expulsion fresco reinforces the scene's royal connotation.²⁹ In an adjacent scene, Jacob is shown wrestling the archangel (IV-A). The scene refers to the biblical account found in Genesis 35:11, which tells of the testing of Jacob's faith and God's promise to make Jacob's descendants future kings of Israel. Here, therefore, clear dynastic parallels between Jacob and Jaroslav can be made. According to Jaroslav's court rhetoric, God rewarded the loyalty of Vladimir with a powerful heir.³⁰ The choice to feature Michael's appearances to Joshua, Zechariah, and Balaam (IV-C, D, E) continues to promote and legitimize Jaroslav's power. In Joshua 5:13–14 and Zechariah 1:1–17, Michael promised divine aid to Joshua and Zechariah in their respective claims and recoveries of Jericho and Jerusalem. Michael appeared

27 “And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world – he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.” Rev 12:7–9.

28 These details are recorded in the 12th-century Primary Chronicle. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, eds and trans. *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian Text*, p. 116. Despite the later date of Primary Chronicle, Franklin and Shepard argue that it is likely Vladimir enforced conversions among Kiev's elite to maintain his hold on power. Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, pp. 163–64.

29 Henry Maguire discusses archangels in imperial costume in “The Heavenly Court,” in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204* (Washington DC, 1997), pp. 247–58. He convincingly argues that the archangels wear imperial costume only when depicted in the heavenly court. In St. Sophia, the appearance of Michael in imperial dress within the heavenly kingdom appropriates this Byzantine visual tradition. The appearance of Byzantine imperial costume may have alluded to the Byzantine emperor, but in a Rus' context, I suggest that the imperial dress represented, not *the* Byzantine emperor, but suggested royal power. Thus the use of imperial costume referred to the Grand Prince Jaroslav and his dynasty who appropriated the New Constantine topos.

30 In his sermon, *On Law and Grace*, Ilarion calls for Vladimir to wake from his grave to see the fruits of his reign. He proclaims, “Arise and behold your son Georgij [Jaroslav]! Behold your offspring! Behold him whom you loved! Behold him whom the Lord brought forth from your loins! Behold him who adorns the throne of your land, and so rejoice and be exceeding glad.” Ilarion, *Sermon on Law and Grace*, ed. Simon Franklin (Cambridge, MA, 1991), p. 24. For more on Ilarion and his sermon see n. 33.

to Balaam in Numbers 22:22–40 to prevent the false prophet from forsaking the Israelites and betraying them to pagan kings. The fresco scenes thus emphasize Michael's role in the Old Testament in bringing the promise of military victory to those loyal to God – Jaroslav's rise to power relied on his military prowess, and thus divine sanction of his victories remained an important aspect to his authority.³¹

Yet the question remains, why is the Byzantine Emperor Constantine featured near the south entrance (IV-F)? The south entrance of St. Sophia possibly functioned as the ceremonial entrance for Jaroslav and his wife.³² I suggest that Jaroslav positioned his own claim to legitimacy through the typological relationship between the Old Testament figures and Constantine. The choice to represent Constantine below the vault presenting scenes of Old Testament theophany conveys the emperor as another paradigmatic Christian ruler whose legitimacy is founded on divine sanction. Constantine, Jacob, Joshua, and Zechariah all achieved military victory through God's blessing.

How does the image of Constantine function as a dynastic image in the decorative program? In terms of symbolism, I suggest Constantine represents, in a Rus' context, the revelation and conversion of Vladimir and the Rus' principality, and the resulting divine sanction that is then conferred to Jaroslav as

31 See n. 4 and n. 6. Jaroslav continued to assert a strong military presence after the threats of his brothers' usurpations were eradicated in 1036. He led an attack on Constantinople in 1043. See Jonathan Shepard, "Why did the Russians attack Byzantium in 1043?" *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher* 22 (1987), 147–212. As part of his visual expression of power, Jaroslav asserted himself as a military leader. He used his name saint, the military saint George, as a royal emblem. In Kiev, his name-saint is represented in St. Sophia with a chapel and fresco program dedicated to Saint George located south of the main apse. Jaroslav also disseminated his emblem on coins outside of Kiev. An extant coin minted during his reign depicts a half-length portrait of Saint George with a Greek naming inscription on the obverse and the dynastic Rjurik emblem of his family on the reverse. The half-length portrait of George in Greek military costume paired with the Rjurik emblem assured that Jaroslav conveyed his message of military strength and dynastic legitimacy to Rus'ian and Byzantine viewers. See Simon Franklin, *Writing, Society and Culture in Early Rus, c. 950–1300* (Cambridge, UK, 2004), p. 52. See also Marina Petrovna Sotnikova and Ivan Georgievich Spasskii, *Russian Coins of the X–XI Centuries A.D.* trans. H. Bartlett Wells (Oxford, 1982).

32 The use of the south door as a royal ceremonial entrance parallels the Byzantine tradition. The ancillary rooms south of this entrance supports its suggested ceremonial function. Jaroslav's entrance in the south would have paralleled the Metropolitan's entrance in the north, which was connected to the Metropolitan's palace. The south door's royal connotation in Rus' churches continued with the construction of St. Sophia in Novgorod where an image of Constantine and Helena is also featured. See n. 19.

Vladimir's legitimate heir. The image of Constantine thereby asserts and reinforces the prince's right to rule. In terms of performance, as Jaroslav entered the church, he functioned as a part of the decorative program. When he walked through the south entrance, Jaroslav, the living prince, was visually juxtaposed with his royal predecessors, stressing the prince's dynastic legitimacy as a new Constantine and successor to a line of divinely sanctioned rulers.³³ This ideology resonates with contemporary Rus' dynastic rhetoric. Ilarion, a priest in the service of the royal family, wrote the sermon, *On Law and Grace*, between 1040 and 1050.³⁴ His sermon celebrates Vladimir, Jaroslav, and the establishment of Christian Kievan Rus'.³⁵ Ilarion describes Vladimir as the "likeness of Constantine [...] he among the Hellenes and the Romans made the kingdom subject to God. And you, oh blessed Vladimir, did likewise."³⁶ Ilarion also describes Vladimir's conversion to Christianity as a moment of divine revelation. "[...] the good Lord looked down upon [Vladimir] and understanding shone forth in his heart [...]"³⁷ Ilarion effectively recognizes Constantine as the prototype for Vladimir, conveyed through their shared divine revelations and conversions.

33 Brubaker discusses how Constantine the Great became a part of Middle Byzantine visual expressions of power and legitimacy in Leslie Brubaker, "To Legitimize an Emperor: Constantine the Visual Authority in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries," in *New Constantines*, ed. Paul Magdalino (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 139–58. Athanasios Markopoulos analyses how Middle Byzantine texts present Constantine I as the model ruler during the Macedonian dynasty. Athanasios Markopoulos, "Constantine the Great in Macedonian historiography: models and approaches," in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries. Papers from the Twenty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St. Andrews, March 1992*, ed. Paul Magdalino (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 159–170.

34 While the twelfth-century Russian Primary Chronicle detailing Jaroslav's rise to power is a tempting source from which to cull evidence for the prince's ideological program, I consider only textual and visual comparanda contemporary with the construction of St. Sophia. Ilarion, *Sermon on Law and Grace*, ed. Simon Franklin, pp. 3–29. Franklin's introduction to his translation provides a thorough overview of Ilarion's life, works, and textual sources. Simon Franklin, "Introduction," in *Sermons and Rhetoric of Kievan Rus'* (Cambridge, MA, 1991), pp. xvi–xliv.

35 Little is known about the life of Ilarion. The *Paterik* of the Kievan Caves Monastery records that he was a priest at the Church of the Holy Apostles at Berestovo, a princely residence located on the Dnieper outside of Kiev. Muriel Heppell, trans. *The Paterik of the Kievan Caves Monastery* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), p. 19. By 1050, Jaroslav appointed Ilarion as the first native Rus' Metropolitan. Franklin, "Introduction," p. xvii.

36 Ilarion, *Sermon on Law and Grace*, ed. Franklin, pp. 22–23.

37 Ilarion, *Sermon on Law and Grace*, ed. Franklin, p. 18.

Ilarion's sermon also alludes to Jaroslav's power and his relationship to his father. The priest claims:

[Jaroslav] does not demolish what you [Vladimir] established, but rather strengthens it; who does not diminish your deeds of devotion, but rather embellishes them; who does not impair, but repairs; for he finished your unfinished works, as Solomon David's; for he built the great temple of God's Holy Wisdom, to sanctify and consecrate your city ...³⁸

Two things stand out in this passage: one is that Jaroslav's legitimacy relies on the dynastic and architectural foundations established by Vladimir. Two, is that despite this reliance, Jaroslav's deeds, devotion, and donations both complete and surpass those of his father. A son surpassing the achievements of his father is a common *topos* in medieval textual and visual traditions.³⁹ It is, I suggest, the means by which Jaroslav conveyed this message in St. Sophia that is unique. He created and presented a new narrative of dynastic legitimacy and authority that was specific to his succession. The frescoes' layout in the Chapel of the Archangel Michael present the conversion of Rus' as a royal act, by framing Vladimir's conversion and Jaroslav's rule as the paradigm of Christian rulership.

Chapel of ss Joachim and Anna

The frescoes of the Chapel of ss Joachim and Anna also convey Jaroslav's dynastic legacy and his authority. I suggest that the decorative program of this chapel offers a second presentation of Jaroslav's patronage, in addition to his donor portrait, by integrating Byzantine iconography into a narrative of royal patronage specific to Jaroslav's reign.

The placement of Constantine and Helena in the chapel's aisle creates a decorative program that celebrates royal dynastic patronage (III-B and III-D). In Byzantine decorative programs, Constantine and Helena represent, among other things, imperial foundation and ecclesiastical patronage; the

38 Ilarion, *Sermon on Law and Grace*, ed. Franklin, pp. 23–24.

39 For example, in Cyril of Jerusalem's *Letter to Constantius* (351), he appeals to the emperor by asserting that an appearance of the cross above Golgotha was a celestial sign of God's support of the emperor – one that surpasses the earthly sign given to his father, Constantine, on the occasion of his discovery of the True Cross. Jan Willem Drijvers, *Cyril of Jerusalem: Bishop and City* (Leiden, 2004), pp. 51–52.

most important of which is Jerusalem's New Temple, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.⁴⁰ As demonstrated above, Vladimir was considered to be a new Constantine in Jaroslav's political ideology for establishing the Rus' Orthodox Church. Princess Anna, moreover, was also known for her ecclesiastical patronage; Yahya of Antioch's *History* records Anna as the founder of many Rus' churches and monasteries.⁴¹ I argue that Jaroslav's political ideology appropriated the image of Constantine and Helena, and its allusion to Byzantine imperial patronage, to parallel Vladimir and Anna as a new Constantine and a new Helena. To feature Constantine and Helena in the aisle of Joachim and Anna thereby lends a royal theme to the decorative program.

The presentation of the images of Constantine and Helena departs from Byzantine visual conventions, which feature Constantine and Helena flanking the Cross.⁴² In the Joachim and Anna aisle, the imperial pair is separated onto two piers in two separate, adjacent bays (III). They retain their association through imperial costume, mirrored poses – each figure is depicted as standing in a frontal position gesturing with their right hand and holding a scroll in their left – and their proximity. The west-facing panel adjacent to the figures of Constantine and Helena on their respective piers is an image of the Cross (Fig. 13.4). This juxtaposition further supports the identification of the imperial pair.⁴³

What function does this innovation serve? I suggest that the separation provides an opportunity to make the connection between Constantine and

40 For the foundation of the Holy Sepulchre see Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3:42, ed., Kirsopp Lake (Cambridge, MA, 1926). For a discussion on the genesis and evolution of legends accorded to Helena's pilgrimage to Jerusalem see Edward D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312–460* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 28–49; Kenneth G. Holum, "Hadrian and Helena: Imperial Travel and the Origins of Christian Holy Land Pilgrimage," in *The Blessings of Pilgrimage*, ed. Robert Ousterhout (Urbana, IL, 1990), pp. 66–77; Jan Willem Drijvers, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding the True Cross* (Leiden, 1992). For Helena's patronage of churches in Jerusalem see Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3:25. Eusebius does not mention Helena in connection to the building of the Holy Sepulchre. For a discussion on how Helena became associated with the church after her death see Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, pp. 39–40.

41 Yahya ibn Sa'id of Antioch, *Patriologia Orientalis*, eds J. Kratchkovsky and A. Vasiliev (Paris, 1932), p. 423. See also Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus*, p. 164.

42 See n. 19.

43 The image of the Cross is repeated in St. Sophia's aisles. They are often arranged in mirrored locations on adjacent piers suggesting their arrangement was not random. The placement of these crosses and their relationship to the overall decorative program deserves more attention.

Vladimir, and Helena and Anna, more explicit. While the two bays featuring Constantine and his mother together convey royal patronage, I suggest each bay also functions to honour Vladimir and Anna individually. Constantine faces a panel depicting Saint Eustace on the opposite pier (III-C). Middle Byzantine hagiographies record Eustace as a second century Roman general who converted to Christianity after witnessing the appearance of Christ while out hunting.⁴⁴ The placement of Eustace on the pier facing the Constantine panel emphasizes commonalities in the saints' *vitae*, both men converted to Christianity after being granted visions. This theme is reminiscent of Ilarion's retelling of Vladimir's vision and subsequent conversion, and reinforces Constantine's role as his prototype. Constantine is given visual emphasis in the bay's fresco program with the addition of the two saints positioned on either side of the emperor. Their proportions are significantly smaller than Constantine, but the figures are also nimbed and wear Byzantine court costume. The use of hieratic scale is unique among the depiction of saints in non-narrative panels in St. Sophia. The earliest surviving Byzantine example in which an emperor is depicted in a frontal pose and in hieratic scale is an image in the Homilies of John Chrysostom (c. 1071–1081) featuring Nikephoros III standing between members of his court.⁴⁵ Yet this is an image of a living emperor, and postdates St. Sophia by over twenty years. The placement of smaller scale figures on either side of a posthumous portrait of an emperor, albeit a sainted emperor, is seemingly unique to St. Sophia in this period. The identity of the smaller figures may not be certain but their significance lies in visually emphasizing Constantine, an important figure in Jaroslav's dynastic ideology.

In the adjacent bay, the Helena panel faces an image of an anonymous female martyr (III-E). Nadia Nikitenko has identified the image as a representation of Anna the Martyr, but does not provide supporting evidence for this identification.⁴⁶ The absence of a naming inscription and limited attributes prevents a secure identification where one may have been clear in the eleventh century. What is important to the aisle's decorative program is the female martyr's function, rather than her identification. It is highly possible that the

44 For Eustace in the Byzantine Greek tradition see François Halkin, ed. *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (Brussels, 1957), p. 201. (BHG 641–643).

45 For discussion of the miniature see: Ioannis Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), pp. 107–18; Henry Maguire, "Style and Ideology in Byzantine Imperial Art." *Gesta* 28:2 (1989), 217–31; Ioli Kalavrezou, "Irregular Marriages in the Eleventh Century and the Zoe and Constantine Mosaic in Hagia Sophia," in *Law and Society in Byzantium, Ninth-Twelfth Centuries*, eds Angeliki E. Laiou and Dieter Simon (Washington DC, 1995), pp. 241–59; Maguire, "The Heavenly Court," pp. 247–58.

46 See n. 24.

viewer was intended to interpret the female martyr as related to the depictions of Helena and Anna, in the same way that the depiction of Eustace is related to Constantine and Vladimir. Thus the aisle in the ss Joachim and Anna Chapel presents, on one level, a unified message commemorating Jaroslav's parents and his dynastic legacy.

I suggest that the images of Constantine and Helena and their proximity to the narrative scenes of the life of the Theotokos in the apse provide a second layer of meaning that emphasizes Jaroslav's Church of St. Sophia as the foundation of a New Temple in Kievan Rus'. Specifically, it is necessary to view the depiction of the Theotokos receiving the purple and wool (III-A). The scene's narrative content originates from the second-century apocryphal *Protevangelium* of Saint James, which describes how the Theotokos came to be chosen by the Temple priests to weave a veil to adorn the Temple altar.⁴⁷ To my knowledge, this is the earliest surviving depiction of this scene in monumental church decoration within an Orthodox context.⁴⁸ Bearing in mind the discussion above, we find that the images of Constantine and Helena and that of the Theotokos adorning the temple offer the viewer a multivalent visual analogy – the Theotokos received materials to adorn the Old Temple, which Constantine and Helena built anew in the form of the Holy Sepulchre. Vladimir and Anna, a new Constantine and a new Helena, established Christianity in Kievan Rus', and their son, Jaroslav, built St. Sophia as the New Temple in the Rus' principality. The nuanced use of Byzantine visual vocabulary in St. Sophia's fresco program demonstrates how Jaroslav appropriated and adapted Orthodox Byzantine visual language into a new narrative of Rus' royal legitimacy and authority.

Jaroslav's need to glorify himself and his dynasty is seen in his funding of the church and his use of the space for ecclesiastical as well as political purposes. The fresco program in the southern chapels of Kiev's St. Sophia presents a unified dynastic message for its patron. The choice of scenes, and their arrangements in the Chapels of the Archangel and Joachim and Anna, assert the Prince's legitimacy by aggrandizing his dynastic lineage through Vladimir and Anna, and his royal patronage through Constantine and Helena.

47 St. James, *Protevangelium*, 10.1., ed. J.K. Elliott (Oxford, 1993), p. 61.

48 Later depictions of the Theotokos receiving the wool include miniatures in two twelfth-century copies of the Homilies of Jacobus Kokkinobaphus: Paris, Library Bibliothèque Nationale, gr. 1208, fol. 147v, and Rome, Library Biblioteca Vaticana gr. 1162, fol. 109r. See Henri Omont, *Miniatures des homélies sur la Vierge du moine Jacques: MS. grec 1208 de la Bibl. nat. de Paris* (Paris, 1927), 19. The earliest depiction of the scene in Byzantine church decorative programs is in the 14th-century mosaics located on the west wall of the inner narthex in Kariye Camii, Istanbul. See Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, "Iconography of the Cycle of the Life of the Virgin," in *The Kariye Djami: Studies in the Art of Kariye Djami and its Intellectual Background*, ed. Paul Atkins Underwood (Princeton, 1975), pp. 161–194.

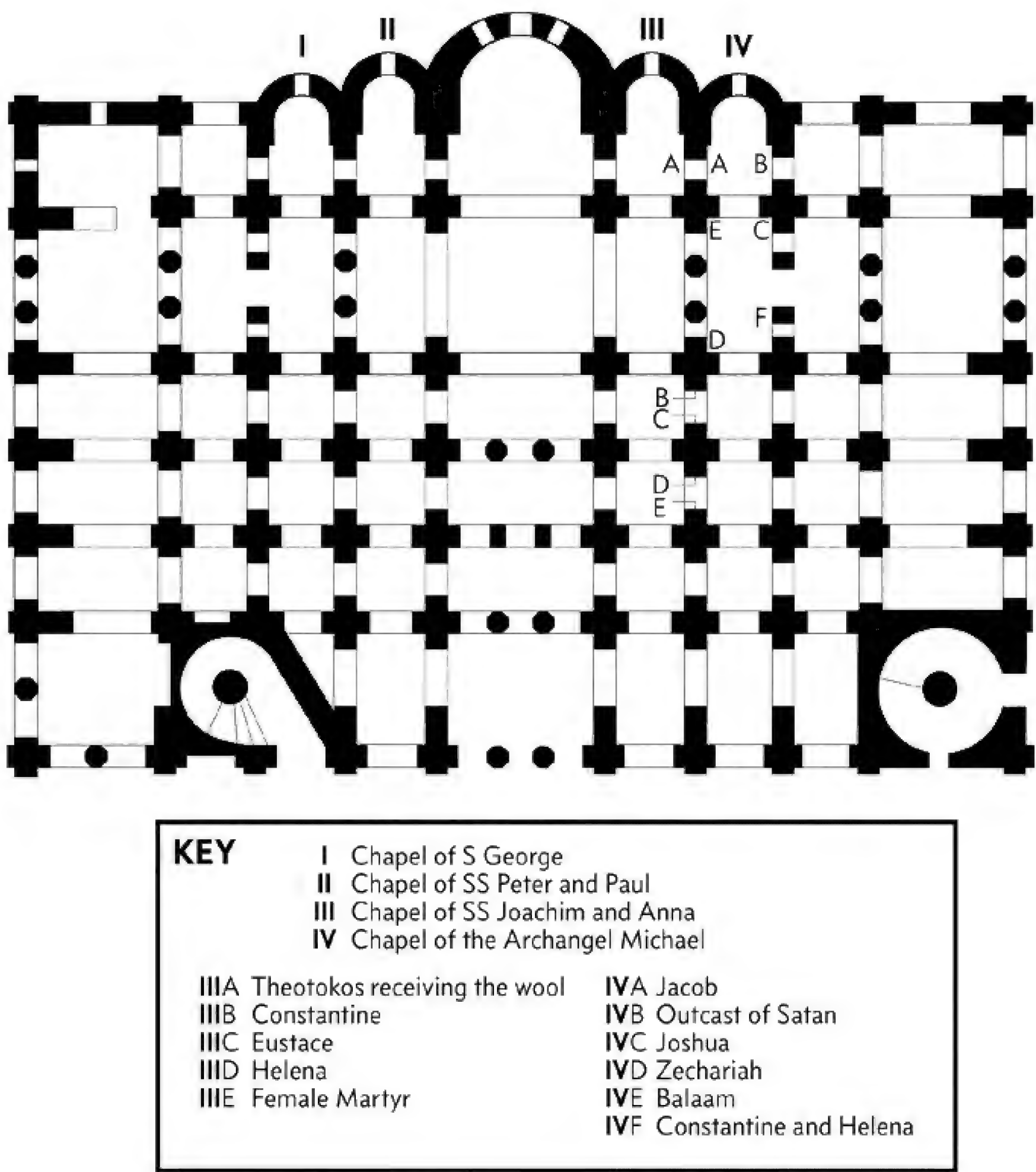


FIGURE 13.1 *Plan of the Church of St. Sophia in Kiev, Ukraine.*
AUTHOR'S DRAWING AFTER JOHN LOWDEN, *EARLY CHRISTIAN AND
BYZANTINE ART* (LONDON, 1997): 253.



FIGURE 13.2 *Constantine and Helena flanking the Cross, St. Sophia, Kiev, Ukraine, eleventh century, fresco.*
AUTHOR'S PHOTOGRAPH.



FIGURE 13.3 *Constantine, St. Sophia, Kiev, Ukraine, eleventh century, fresco.*
AUTHOR'S PHOTOGRAPH.



FIGURE 13.4 *Helena, St. Sophia, Kiev, Ukraine, eleventh century, fresco.*
AUTHOR'S PHOTOGRAPH.

The Miracle Cycle between Constantinople, Thessalonike, and Mistra

Maria Alessia Rossi

This paper will address the dialectic between the City and the cities from an art historical perspective. I will focus on the development of Christ's Miracle Cycle in Constantinople, Thessalonike, and Mistra. The comparison of three churches housing this iconography, one from each city, will give an insight into the relationship between the capital and the other cities of the empire in the early Palaiologan period: the monastery of Chora in Constantinople (1316–21), the *parekklesion* of St. Euthymios in Thessalonike (1303), and the church of the Apendiko in Mistra (1311–13).¹ The aim is to examine the differences and similarities in the layout and grouping of the episodes of this Cycle, as well as the function and meaning they came to convey. In the first instance, this is in order to understand why this rare iconography was chosen to decorate churches so far away from each other. Secondly, this paper will ask whether the iconographic scheme conveyed different meanings in different cities and contexts.

The reconquest of Constantinople by Emperor Michael VIII in 1261 sealed the beginning of the Palaiologan period and was hailed by its contemporaries as the will of God.² Nevertheless, the empire was reduced in size, and surrounded

1 For a general overview of the artistic and cultural patronage of the period, see Edmund Boleslaw Fryde, *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance (1261–c. 1360)* (Leiden, 2000). For the years concerning Andronikos II's reign, see Alice-Mary Talbot, "Building Activity in Constantinople under Andronikos II: The Role of Women Patrons in the Construction and Restoration of Monasteries," in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. Nevra Necipoğlu (Leiden, 2001), pp. 329–344. For a historical survey, see Donald Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, (1261–1453)*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 1–141.

2 For Michael VIII Palaiologos, see Deno John Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West 1258–1282: A Study in Byzantine-Latin Relations* (Hamden, 1973); Ruth Macrides, "The New Constantine and the New Constantinople–1261?," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 6 (1980), 13–41. For the reconquest of Constantinople, see Georgios Akropolites, *The History*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Oxford, 2007), pp. 270–275; George Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. Albert Fallier and Vitalien Laurent, 2 vols (Paris, 1984–2000), 1:194–202. See also Vincent Puech, "La refondation religieuse de Constantinople par Michael VIII Paléologue (1259–82): un acte politique," in *Religion et Société Urbaine au Moyen Âge, études offertes à Jean-Louis*

by enemies. This is why, along with the capital, other cities in strategic positions increased their power and wealth. There are two major instances of this process within the Byzantine sphere: Thessalonike and Mistra. The former was at the frontier with the Serbian Kingdom and became the crossroads for diplomatic missions and the headquarters for military campaigns.³ In 1303 Andronikos II's second wife, Eirene, decided to move her court to Thessalonike, increasing even further the artistic and political importance of the city. Mistra, on the other hand, was a newly-founded city that within but a short time became the commercial and military strategic axis of the Byzantine Peloponnese.⁴

The Miracle Cycle is rarely depicted before and after the early Palaiologan period (1261–1328).⁵ Its sudden proliferation is, therefore, likely to be linked to the socio-political and historical circumstances surrounding Andronikos II's reign. His first imperial act was to reject the Union of the Churches imposed by his father, Michael VIII, and restore the Orthodox Church. Andronikos II was extremely concerned with re-establishing a sense of unity among his subjects. To do so, he promoted the religious element and the Patriarchate as the ramparts of the Byzantine Empire by means of newly active shrines, saints' relics, and the creation of a beneficent atmosphere in which a Renaissance could take place. The proliferation of miraculous shrines, miracle accounts, saints' lives, and of the Miracle Cycle should be read as part of a broader trend, pursued by

Biget par ses anciens élèves, ed. Patrick Boucheron and Jacques Chiffolleau (Paris, 2000), pp. 351–362.

- 3 For contributions on the history and artistic role of Thessalonike in the Palaiologan period, see the papers in the collective volume *Symposium on Late Byzantine Thessalonike*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot and Jean-Michel Spieser (Washington, D.C., 2004); Marcus Rautman, "Patrons and Buildings in Late Byzantine Thessaloniki," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 39 (1989), 295–315.
- 4 See *Viewing the Morea: Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese*, ed. Sharon Gerstel (Washington, D.C., 2013). On the architectural and artistic campaigns in Mistra, see Suzy Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques des églises byzantines de Mistra* (Paris, 1970), pp. 8, 41; Manolis Chatzidakis, *Mystras: The Medieval City and the Castle* (Athens, 1992), pp. 59–67.
- 5 There is no complete monograph on the Miracle Cycle. The main studies dealing with the grouping and disposition of Christ's Miracle Cycle are: Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'évangile aux XIV^e, XV^e et XVI^e siècles: d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos* (Paris, 1916), pp. 57–66; the essay of Paul Atkins Underwood, "Some Problems in Programs and Iconography of Ministry Cycles," in *The Kariye Djami: Studies in the Art of Kariye Djami and its Intellectual Background*, ed. Paul Atkins Underwood (Princeton, 1975), pp. 245–302. See also Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "Christ as Ministrant and the Priest as Ministrant of Christ in a Palaeologan Program of 1303," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 32 (1978), 197–216.

Andronikos II and his entourage.⁶ Three churches housing this iconography have been chosen to be the focus of this paper. There are two reasons for their selection. First, their Miracle Cycles are among the best preserved, and second, the patronage and history of the buildings is extensively documented, linking these commissions to a select part of the elite.

To briefly survey the three churches' history and patronage, therefore, the *parekklesion* of St. Euthymios in Thessalonike was restored and redecorated by Michael Glabas Tarchaneiotes, one of Andronikos II's most distinguished generals, and his wife, Maria Doukaina Komnene Palaiologina in 1303.⁷ The frescoes include the cycle of the life of St. Euthymios, in the lateral naves, and the life of Christ, in the central nave. The Miracle Cycle, counting eight episodes, is represented on both sides of the main nave, below the Dodekaorton.⁸

The monastery of Chora in Constantinople was restored and lavishly decorated with mosaics between 1316 and 1320 by Theodoros Metochites, Andronikos II's 'prime minister' and one of the leading scholars of the time.⁹

6 For Andronikos II's reign, see Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, Books 7–11; Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Immanuel Bekker and Ludovici Schopeni (Bonn, 1830–1845). Modern accounts are: Angeliki E. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins: The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II 1282–1328* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972); Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, pp. 93–166. For the proliferation of miraculous accounts and written sources, see Alice-Mary Talbot, "Hagiography in Late Byzantium (1204–1453)," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, ed. Stefanos Efthymiadis (Farnham, 2011), pp. 173–198; Stefanos Efthymiadis, "Late Byzantine Collections of Miracles and Their Implications," in *The Heroes of the Orthodox Church: The New Saints, 8th–16th century*, ed. Eleonora Kountoura-Galake (Athens, 2004), pp. 239–250, at p. 240; Alice-Mary Talbot, "Old Wine in New Bottles: The Rewriting of Saints' Lives in the Palaeologan Period," in *The Twilight of Byzantium: Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire*, ed. Slobodan Ćurčić and Doula Mouriki (Princeton, 1991), pp. 15–26.

7 For the study of the *parekklesion*, see Euthymios N. Tsigaridas, *Οι τοιχογραφίες του παρεκκλησίου του Αγίου Ευθυμίου (1302/3) στον ναό του Αγίου Δημητρίου: έργο του Μανουήλ Πανσέληνου στη Θεσσαλονίκη* [*Frescoes in the Parekklesion of St. Euthymios (1302/3) in the Church of St. Demetrios: The work of Manuel Panselinos in Thessaloniki*] (Thessaloniki, 2008); Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "The Frescoes of the Parekklesion of St. Euthymios in Thessaloniki: Patrons, Workshops and Style," in *The Twilight of Byzantium*, pp. 11–60; Gouma-Peterson, "Christ as Ministrant"; Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "The Parecclesion of St. Euthymios in Thessalonica: Art and Monastic Policy Under Andronicos II," *The Art Bulletin* 58/2 (1976), 168–183.

8 For a detailed comment on the scenes represented, see Gouma-Peterson, "Christ as Ministrant," pp. 202–209.

9 See Underwood, "Some Problems". For Metochites, see Ihor Ševčenko, "Théodore Métochites, Chora et les courants intellectuels de l'époque," in *Art et société a Byzance sous les Paleologues. Actes du colloque organise par l'Association Internationale des Etudes Byzantines a Venise en septembre 1968* (Venice, 1971), pp. 16–39.

The church was a renewed imperial foundation, already associated in time with the Emperors Justinian and Isaakios Komnenos.¹⁰ Christ's Miracle Cycle is located in the inner and outer narthexes, comprising originally 36 episodes, 28 of which are now preserved.

The church of the Aphenliko of the Brontochion monastery in Mistra was built and decorated between 1311 and 1313 by the abbot Pachomios.¹¹ He was granted the title of Great *protosynkellos* and Archimandrite of the Peloponnese, and the monastery was declared "royal" and independent of all local ecclesiastical authority by two chrysobulls issued by Andronikos II, preserved on the walls of the south-west chapel of the narthex. A complete Miracle Cycle, composed of nine episodes, can be found in the narthex.¹²

From this brief overview it is clear that, during these twenty years, high-ranking political and religious *ktētors* commissioned churches housing Miracle Cycles throughout the empire. All these figures belong to the entourage surrounding Andronikos II. Thus, the patronage seems to connect the proliferation of this iconography to the capital, overcoming the large distance between these cities. Yet several dissimilarities, ranging from the medium used, the number of episodes depicted, and its setting within the interior space of the church, demand further investigation. Are these alterations the consequence of different architectural plans and the wealth of the patrons, or are they the outcome of consciously individualised programmes? In the latter case, would the similarities be ascribed to the influence of the capital and the differences to independent and local trends? However, if the patrons were using this iconography to show their links and allegiance to Constantinople and the emperor, then why did they modify it? Did this Cycle become the vehicle for *ktētors* to express common values or individual aims?

In theory, the Miracle Cycle could include any miraculous event worked by Christ from the beginning of his Ministry to the Passion, amounting to c. 60 episodes. Among these, only one-third are known to have been represented in monumental decorations of the early Palaiologan period. No precise rationale

10 For the numerous restorations and architectural phases, see Robert Ousterhout, *The Architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul* (Washington, D.C., 1987).

11 Rhodoniki Etzeoglou, Ο ναός της Οδηγήτριας του Βροντοχίου στον Μυστρά: Οι τοιχογραφίες του νάρθηκα και η λειτουργική χρήση του χώρου [*The Virgin Hodegetria Church of the Brontochion at Mistra: The Wall Paintings of the Narthex and its Liturgical Function*] (Athens, 2013). See also Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques*; Chatzidakis, *Mystras*.

12 Rhodoniki Etzeoglou, "The Cult of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege at Mistra," in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 239–250, at p. 241; Melita Emmanuel, "Religious Imagery in Mystra. Donors and Iconographic Programmes," in *Material Culture and Well-Being in Byzantium 400–1453*, ed. Michael Grünbart (Vienna, 2007), pp. 119–127.

has ever been identified for the selection, grouping, or arrangement of the episodes within the interior space of the church. No one fixed layout seems to apply to all churches, as if there was no model to look to. The episodes chosen and their number are never the same. The scenes' disposition within the Cycle differs extensively, as does their location within the building. Bearing this in mind, the second part of this paper will examine the Miracle Cycle in each of the three churches in order to assess and explain their similarities and differences.

In the *parekklesion* of St. Euthymios, the Miracle Cycle is to be found on the spandrels of the north and south arcade in the nave, immediately below the Dodekaorton, giving the scenes a distinct prominence.¹³ Beginning from the apse in a clockwise direction we see Christ Reading in the Synagogue, Christ Preaching in the Temple, the Purging of the Temple, and on the opposite wall the Healing of the Man suffering from Dropsy, the Healing of the Paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, the Healing of the Woman Bent Double, Christ and the Samaritan Woman, and the Healing of the Blind Born.¹⁴

The episodes do not follow the chronological sequence derived from the Gospels. Instead, it appears that the miracle scenes on the north spandrel have been intentionally paired with the Ministry episodes on the south spandrel, the latter as prefigurations of the former. For instance, in Luke's account of the Reading in the Synagogue, Christ refers to Isaiah's prophecy saying that "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing".¹⁵ This episode establishes the symbolic nature of this Cycle. Christ is the Messiah, the source of spiritual and physical healings. He has been sent to proclaim the "recovering of sight to the blind", and indeed, on the opposite wall he is depicted healing the Blind Born.¹⁶ Furthermore, both the latter and the following episode, Christ Preaching in the Temple, took place on the Sabbath.¹⁷ Christ asked the Jews "are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well?"¹⁸ He is referring to the Sabbath miracles that he is about to perform

13 I am using the term "Miracle Cycle", instead of "Ministry Cycle", because, even if the episodes on the south spandrel are not miracles *per se*, they have been clearly chosen as prefigurations to the miracles on the north spandrel, thus establishing the miraculous nature of this Cycle.

14 The last episode on the south spandrel has seriously deteriorated and is hard to identify. Gouma-Peterson has suggested it could have been the Miracle at Cana: Gouma-Peterson, "Christ as Ministrant," p. 205.

15 Translation from the English Standard Version (Luke 4:21). For the entire episode, see Luke 4:17–21. For the reference to Isaiah's prophecy see 61:1–2.

16 Isaiah 61:1.

17 John 7:14–24.

18 Translation from the English Standard Version (Luke 7:23).

during his Ministry, and that are depicted on the opposite wall: the Healing of the Man suffering from Dropsy, of the Paralytic, of the Blind Born, and of the Woman Bent Double – as we shall later see in detail.

In the Miracles on the north aisle, two other groupings are worthy of note. First, the triad of the Paralytic, the Samaritan Woman, and the Blind Born. Second, the grouping of the Sabbath Miracles – this refers to healings performed by Christ on Saturday, the Jews' holy day. Beginning with the former, the three episodes are depicted one after the other. Their arrangement can be explained by the complex and multi-layered symbolism of these scenes.¹⁹ They were read aloud and celebrated on the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Sunday after Easter. Along with the liturgical aspect, they are also linked by the key role played by water in their narrative. It is through water that healings, both physical and spiritual, are performed; this is a life force and was therefore associated with baptismal waters from the earliest Christian tradition. The linking of these three episodes, as we shall see, is one of the most recurrent groupings in the early Palaiologan period.

The second arrangement refers to four out of the five miracles depicted on the north aisle.²⁰ These episodes are linked as they all took place on the Sabbath, thus sharing several layers of interpretation. First, they are healing miracles displaying the powers of Christ. Second, they are witness to Jesus as the Messiah, who fulfils the Old Testament prophecies, and brings God's reign – as seen in the episodes of Christ Reading in the Synagogue and Preaching in the Temple, on the opposite wall. Finally, the interaction with the Jews displays their limitations, revealing Christianity as the true faith.²¹

The question is, which of these elements and considerations come into being in monumental painting and how? In the Gospels, often the description of the healing itself does not exceed two sentences; yet, whole paragraphs are devoted to the issue of the Sabbath. From an iconographic point of view, despite the fact that the inclusion of the Jews is introduced in monumental decorations in these years, it does not become a fixed element.²² This is likely to be a consequence of the different role these episodes assumed during

19 Underwood, "Some Problems," pp. 257–262.

20 These are the Healing of the Man suffering from Dropsy, the Paralytic at Bethesda, the Woman Bent Double, and the Blind Born.

21 For the study of the Sabbath and the 'Sabbath Miracles', see Paul Cotton, *From Sabbath to Sunday: A Study in Early Christianity* (Bethlehem, 1933); Yong-Eiu Yang, *Jesus and the Sabbath in Matthew's Gospel* (Sheffield, 1997).

22 The only exception is the Healing of the Man suffering from Dropsy. His illness is symbolised by the exceedingly swollen belly, to the point he cannot stand on his own. He makes use of one or even two crutches, and in nearly all episodes there is a Pharisee grabbing him underneath his arms to support him. Thus, the Pharisees' appearance in

the centuries: in the beginning, when Christianity was not the official faith of the empire, these scenes were used explicitly as anti-Jewish propaganda. Subsequently, with the disappearance of the threat of Christianity's overhaul, also the meaning faded, leaving behind only the symbol. In the Palaiologan period they become visual accessories, narrative devices in order to express this dichotomy between Christians and Jews, believers and non-believers. Yet there is more to it. If we compare the episodes of the Healing of the Man suffering from Dropsy, and Christ and the Samaritan woman in St. Euthymios, both the group of Jews and the inhabitants of Sichar play a similar role: they witness the miracle. They are portrayed in the background, on the far right, a group of blurred figures participating in the amazement of the scene. Miraculous events need to have witnesses to be proven true, and in the early Palaiologan period this notion seems to be translated into monumental depictions. Bearing in mind that in these years there is an increase in newly active miraculous shrines, perhaps the viewer could be led to identify himself, reminding him of a miracle he had witnessed.

Along with the choice and grouping of the miracle episodes, it is necessary to contextualise their role in the remaining decoration of the church and its dedication. The prominence given to the life and miracles of Christ in the central nave must be linked to the iconographic programme of the lateral naves where the life of Saint Euthymios is depicted. The patrons wished to stress the correspondence between the two figures and they managed to do so by mirroring the life and miracles of Saint Euthymios with Christ's. The meeting with the Samaritan woman and the conversion of the Samaritans has been paired with Saint Euthymios baptizing Aspebetos and the conversion of the Saracens. Visually the artist chose to represent both fonts with a cruciform shape to enhance their shared symbolism. Overall, the iconography used for the miracles of Saint Euthymios, is the same as that used for Christ's, allowing the audience to associate the two.²³

It seems therefore, that the patrons, when conceiving the iconographic programme of the *parekklesion*, chose to use Christ's Miracle Cycle as vehicle to

the iconography of the Man suffering from Dropsy is not linked to their role played in the Sabbath controversy, but mainly to compositional needs.

23 Worthy of note is the resemblance between St. Euthymios' Healing a Demoniac and Christ's Healing of the Demoniac in St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessaloniki. For an image, see Anna Tsitouridou, *Hō zōgraphikos diakosmos tou Hagiou Nikolaou Orphanou stē Thessalonikē: symvolē stē meletē tēs palaiologeias zōgraphikēs kata ton prōimo 14^o aiōna* [The Wall Paintings of St Nicholas Orphanos in Thessaloniki: Contribution to the Study of Palaiologan Painting in the Early 14th century] (Thessaloniki, 1986), plate 47.

express several multi-layered meanings. The prominence given to miraculous episodes in the central nave is uncommon and should be linked to the double role played by the Cycle both in connection to Christ and Saint Euthymios. Along with the overall significance of the programme, the episodes have been sub-grouped in connection to liturgical and didactic influences. This trend, as we shall see, is one of the main characteristics of the Palaiologan period.

In the case of the monastery of Chora, the use of mosaic and the greater space available made it possible for Theodoros Metochites to plan an extensive, complex, and lavish iconographic programme. The last two vaults of the narthex and almost the whole exonarthex are dedicated to the Miracle Cycle, amounting to 28 episodes.²⁴ When examining the Cycle we notice that also in this church the grouping of the episodes is not based on a chronological account, but on several sub-groupings depending on liturgical, thematic, and didactic influences. Three out of the four pendentives of the sixth bay of the outer narthex are used for the depiction of the Healing of the Paralytic, Christ and the Samaritan Woman and the Healing of the Blind Born. As Paul Underwood has noticed “It is of some reference that the fourth pendentive contains only some foliate ornament, a fact that can be explained only on the grounds that the miracles of the three pendentives would clearly stand as a group.”²⁵ As already seen in the *parekklesion* of St. Euthymios this triad is frequently grouped together on the basis of liturgical and symbolic influences.

Similar liturgical considerations can be traced in the dominical vault of the third bay of the outer narthex, where the Miracle at Cana and the Multiplication of the Loaves are paired, parallel to the apse of the church, subverting the narrative and chronological layout of the Miracle Cycle.²⁶ This arrangement was conceived in order for the beholder to visually associate these episodes with the altar and the Eucharist performed on it, just by raising his eyes. The remaining decoration of the vault, further enhances the significance of these scenes. Below the vault, the two lunettes depict the dedicatory

24 For a complete list of the episodes depicted, see Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, 1:108–149.

25 Underwood, “Some Problems,” p. 257.

26 The previous vault comprises the Baptism and Temptations, which would chronologically be followed by the Marriage at Cana, but not by the Multiplication of the Loaves. The following vault is completely destroyed, while in the fifth vault we find the Healing of the Paralytic at Bethesda and at Capernum, the Healing of the Blind Born, the Samaritan Woman at the Well, and the Healing of the Man suffering from Dropsy, which are not arranged in chronological order (some precede and some come later than the Multiplication of the Loaves). It is worth noting that the exonarthex, at the time of Metochites’ restoration works, was an open portico, subsequently closed off by the insertion of arcosolia: Robert Ousterhout, *The Art of the Kariye Camii* (London, 2002).

figures of the monastery and church, namely Christ, labelled as the “Land of the Living”, and the Virgin, as the “Container of the Uncontainable”.²⁷ It is clear that the decoration was aimed at a visual correspondence between the use of the word ‘container’ and the depiction of the baskets, in the Multiplication of the Loaves, and the amphorae, in the Miracle at Cana, both to be found in the pendentives of the vault. Furthermore, the association of the miracles with the image of the Virgin and Christ expresses the fundamental dogmas of Incarnation and Salvation. The latter is exemplified by the exceptional motif of the slaying of the calf in the pendentive.²⁸ This iconography has no direct textual relation to the Marriage at Cana, but rather it originates from the Parable of the Prodigal Son.²⁹ The calf has been interpreted since early Christianity as a symbol of Christ and his sacrifice. Thus, Underwood has suggested this detail was added to the Marriage at Cana “as a prefiguration of one of the elements of the Eucharist”.³⁰ Let me add that along with the symbolic interpretation, these two episodes share also certain elements of the narrative – that is, the feast and the celebration. In the parable, the father is preparing a banquet for his son, while the miracle performed by Christ takes place at a wedding feast. This link perhaps made it easier for the viewer to connect the episodes, even without a direct textual relationship. The overall arrangement of the dominical vault of the third bay of the outer narthex of Chora is a unique instance within the Palaiologan period, emphasizing the importance played by liturgy in the entire decorative programme.³¹

Finally, we should consider the south bay of the inner narthex of Chora’s main church. The four pendentives deploy a didactic device very common in the grouping of the episodes within the Miracle Cycle. The two eastern ones depict healings concerning women, namely, Peter’s Mother-in-Law and the Woman with the Issue of Blood; while the western ones, represent Healings

27 For the dedication of the church and monastery, see Natalia Teteriatnikov, “The Dedication of the Chora Monastery in the Time of Andronikos II Palaiologos,” *Byzantion* 66 (1996), 188–207. For the epithets, see also Robert Ousterhout, “The Virgin of the Chora: An Image and Its Contexts,” in *The Sacred Image East and West*, ed. Robert Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker (Urbana, 1995), pp. 91–109; Ousterhout, *The Art of the Kariye Camii*.

28 Underwood, “Some Problems,” pp. 266, 280.

29 For the Parable of the Prodigal Son see Luke 15:11–32. For the specific reference to the slaying of the calf, see Luke 15:23.

30 Underwood, “Some Problems,” p. 266 (footnote 97).

31 The only other case is in the gallery of St. Sophia on Kiev, dated to the 11th century. On the south wall is depicted the Miracle at Cana. On the north wall, below the scene of the Last Supper, and opposite the Miracle at Cana, is the Multiplication of Loaves. For the church, see Oleksa Povstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev* (New York, 1954).

of blind men, namely, the Blind and Dumb and the Two Blind Men. From a narrative point of view these scenes do not have anything in common. Neither do they share any iconographic link, except for the mutual illness of the Healings of the Blind and Dumb and the Two Blind Men. They have been grouped together as a didactic device that allows the audience to recognize that everyone could benefit from Christ's miracles. The depiction of both men and women reassures the viewer of Christ's equal compassion and forgiveness, and makes it easier to identify with the miraculously cured figure.

Along with this interpretation, Natalia Teteriatnikov has suggested that the eight miraculous healings depicted in the south bay should be associated also with another *ktētor* active in the monastery of Chora in those same years, the nun Melania (the Lady of the Mongols).³² She has been identified as Maria Palaiologina, illegitimate daughter of Michael VIII and therefore half-sister of Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos, and aunt of Metochites' daughter and son-in-law. She is portrayed in the renewed mosaic panel of the Deesis in the south bay of the inner narthex.³³ Teteriatnikov argues that Christ's miracles were conceived and selected in order to reflect Melania's life as well as the virtues of her soul. For instance, the Healing of the Woman with the Issue of Blood would symbolize a miraculous cure that happened to Melania.³⁴ While the three blind men could metaphorically represent the virtues of the souls of the three men she intended to marry.³⁵ Whether one decides to accept this interpretation or not, what is clear is that in Chora miracles assume a new and subjective emphasis.

The Cycle in Chora differs from the one of St. Euthymios, as no unique and coherent arrangement can be identified. They are associated though, as they both make use of several sub-groupings to the detriment of a chronological layout. Two elements can be considered characteristic of the Miracle Cycle in Chora. First, the iconographic programme and the architecture of the building echo each other. The latter seems to act as a vehicle to divide or unite the

32 Natalia Teteriatnikov, "The Place of the Nun Melania (the Lady of the Mongols) in the Deesis Program of the Inner Narthex of Chora, Constantinople," *Cahiers Archeologique* 43 (1995), 163–180.

33 Teteriatnikov, "The Place of the Nun Melania," p. 165.

34 The account of Melania's miraculous healing has been preserved in one of Manuel Philes' poems: Lee F. Sherry, "The Poem of Maria Komnene Palaiologina to the Virgin and Mother of God, the Chorine," *Cahiers Archeologique* 43 (1995), 181–182. For a commentary, see Catherine Asdracha, "A Brief Commentary to the Verses of Supplication to the Virgin, Dedicated to her by the Despoina of Mongoulion," *Cahiers Archeologique* 43 (1995), 183–184.

35 Teteriatnikov, "The Place of the Nun Melania," p. 171.

grouping of the episodes, as in the case of the vaults and pendentives.³⁶ Second, Christ's miracles are associated with personal interpretations and embedded in the feast calendar of the Orthodox Church.

While in the *parekklesion* of St. Euthymios, the viewer's attention is directed to Christ as the prototype of the miracle-worker, and subsequently to St. Euthymios, in Chora, the miracles become something the viewer can relate to directly, either by means of the liturgical calendar, or by highlighting the equal compassion of Christ. If we compare the depiction of the Healing of the Paralytic at Bethesda in Chora and in St. Euthymios we come to a similar conclusion. Usually the iconography of the episodes focuses on Christ blessing the paralytic, who is carrying his mat and walking away, as in St. Euthymios. In the background there is a columnar structure with five vaults symbolizing the legendary five porticos of the pool of Bethesda. Instead, in Chora a narrative version of this episode is chosen, dividing the action in two scenes: first, the paralytic is depicted in the act of arising from his bed, with his arms stretched out towards Christ; and in a second moment while picking up his mat and walking away. Secondary groups and details are added, ranging from the disciples following Christ to the crowd of Jews. These symbols and conventions add extra layers of meaning to the episodes, increasing the sense of narrative and allowing the viewer to participate in the action, instead of focusing exclusively on Christ.

The last instance is the Aphenidiko in Mistra. The Miracle Cycle is confined to the vaults and the side tympana of the narthex. Eight miracles survive: starting from the north vault in a clockwise direction, we find Christ and the Samaritan Woman, the Miracle at Cana, the Healing of the Man suffering from Dropsy, the Healing of the Blind Born, the Healing of Peter's Mother-in-law, the Healing of the Paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, the Woman with the issue of Blood, and the Healing of the Halt and Blind in Solomon's Temple.³⁷ The narrative sequence has once again been altered in favour of thematic and liturgical arrangements. Several groupings already identified in St. Euthymios and Chora also appear in the Aphenidiko. For instance the triad of the Samaritan, Blind Born, and the Paralytic. Also, of the nine episodes depicted, four are Sabbath Miracles and they are told as a continuous narrative, starting from the north to the west wall.

36 For a general overview of the relationship between architecture and decoration in Chora, see Ousterhout, *The Architecture of the Kariye Camii*, pp. 133–141.

37 For the iconographic programme in detail, see Etzeoglou, "The Cult of the Virgin," pp. 241–242.

The depiction of the Virgin *zōodochos pēgē* in the eastern tympanum of the narthex has led scholars to argue that the whole programme is linked with the cult of the *zōodochos pēgē*.³⁸ This shrine was founded by Emperor Leon I (457–74) on the site of a miraculous spring in Constantinople. Through the centuries it was enlarged and embellished several times.³⁹ In the Palaiologan period, our primary source is the ecclesiastical historian Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, who wrote a lengthy account of its history, reporting the miracles that had occurred in previous centuries and adding the miraculous cures wrought in his own time.⁴⁰ Among these, he mentions healings of women with the issue of blood, blind men, and paralytics, all of which are depicted in the Aphenidiko. When recounting the miraculous healing of a blind man at the *zōodochos pēgē*, Xanthopoulos compares it with Christ's healing of the Blind Born. The same happens in Miracle 61, when a "long-time paralytic" is associated to the Paralytic at the pool of Bethesda. Thus, Christ's miraculous episodes as depicted in the Aphenidiko are the figurative counterparts to those that occurred at the Pege and that have been recounted by Xanthopoulos.

If we compare the Healing of the Paralytic at the pool of Bethesda in the Aphenidiko, to the ones previously seen in St. Euthymios or Chora, we notice several dissimilarities. Here, on the left, Christ is depicted healing the paralytic, who is represented first, lying in bed and then, taking up his mat and walking

38 Etzeoglou, "The cult of the Virgin," p. 242.

39 Two accounts recounting the miracles that occurred at the Zoodochos Pege have been preserved. The first is an anonymous collection dating to the 10th century: *Miracle Tales from Byzantium*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Cambridge, Mass., 2012). The second was written by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos at the beginning of the 14th century and has not been translated yet. It has been preserved in several manuscripts and was published at the beginning of the 19th century: *Νικηφόρου Καλλίστου Ξανθοπούλου, Περὶ συστάσεως του σεβασμίου οἴκου τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ζωοδόχου Πηγῆς καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ ὑπερφυῶς τελεσθέντων θαυμάτων* [Of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, Concerning the Foundation of the Venerable House of the Zōodochos Pēgē in Constantinople and the Extraordinary Miracles that Occured There], ed. A. Pamperis (Leipzig, 1802).

40 There exists no critical edition, translation and commentary of Xanthopoulos' account. For further contributions, see Alice-Mary Talbot, "Healing Shrines in Late Byzantine Constantinople," in *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 1–24; Alice-Mary Talbot, "Two Accounts of Miracles at the Pege Shrine in Constantinople," *Travaux et Memoires* 14 (2002), 605–15; Stephanos Efthymiadis, "Le Monastère de la Source à Constantinople et ses deux recueils de miracles: entre hagiographie et patriographie," *Revue des études Byzantines* 64 (2006–2007), 283–309.

away.⁴¹ On the right, exceptionally, is represented the angel stirring the waters and a sick man being carried into the pool. The Gospel of John recounts that once a year its waters were stirred by an angel and assumed healing powers.⁴² But only the first to enter the pool could be cured. The paralytic did not have anyone to help him enter the pool quickly enough, and had been waiting for 38 years. When Christ saw him and learned about his affliction, he immediately cured him. In the background there is the five-domed stoa.

How can one explain the need to alter the usual schematic iconography of this episode for a complex and multi-layered one? Furthermore, who is the man being carried into the pool? Rhodoniki Etzeoglou suggested that the artist depicted him in order to visualize the exact words from the Gospel “whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had”, as it happens in certain manuscripts.⁴³ Yet, it is an *unicum* in monumental decorations, especially as in all the other instances the group of invalids is depicted *waiting* to be cured, and never *being* cured, as in the church of the Prodomos near Serres (1354–55).⁴⁴ Why would the artist in the Apendiko depict the contemporaneous healing of the paralytic by Christ, and of another sick man by the waters of Bethesda? Would not this undermine the healing powers of Christ?

At the end of the account Xanthopoulos makes a comparison between the holy spring of the *zōodochos pēgē* and all the other healing waters, among which is the pool of Bethesda, and judges the former to be superior to all.⁴⁵ He explains that the miracles accomplished at the pool of Bethesda are great but happen only once a year and only heal one person. The healing waters of the *pēgē*, conversely, stretch throughout the centuries and do not remain inactive, but become a medicine for all. It is probable, therefore, that the alterations in the iconography can be traced back to Xanthopoulos’ account. The episode assumes a twofold meaning: the healing of the Paralytic and the angel stirring the waters refer to the miracle performed by Christ, but the action that is

41 The episode is poorly preserved. In a newly published book on the church by Etzeoglou, there is a drawing outlining the different figures of the scene and a photograph: Rhodoniki Etzeoglou, *Ho Naos tes Hodegetrias*, Figs. 50, 51.

42 John 5:1–18.

43 John 5:4. See also Etzeoglou, *Ho Naos tes Hodegetrias*, pp. 120–121.

44 Andreas Xyngopoulos, *Hai toichographiai tou kathilikou tes mones Prodromou para tas Serras* [*The Frescoes of the Katholikon of the Prodomos Monastery in Serres*] (Thessaloniki, 1973).

45 Pamperis, *Nikephorou*, pp. 94–96.

taking place recalls the shrine of the *zōodochos pēgē*, where the sick could be healed by immersion in the waters.

A similar consideration can be made for the episode of the Marriage at Cana. This depicts only the scene of the miracle of the jars. The artist consciously neglected the feast, which had increased its importance in the early Palaiologan period, assuming greater dimensions. Christ is represent on the left performing the miracle and is followed by the Virgin, a disciple, another individual and, on the far right, a servant with a jar on his shoulders. In the foreground there are the six jars. Overall the scene is very concise and schematic. All the attention is focused on the transformation of water into wine, the jars and Christ. Why choose to neglect what appears to be the common iconographic trend of the time, namely the banquet feast? The answer appears to be that this depiction of the marriage at Cana has been used as the symbolic synthesis of two different moments: the miracle performed by Christ, and the healing powers of the spring of the *zōodochos pēgē*, symbolized by the water pouring from the jars.

In conclusion, the iconography in the three churches discussed present numerous dissimilarities, including differences in media, in the number of episodes that constitute each Cycle, and in their setting within the church. The selection, grouping, and layout of the episodes also present different arrangements, which, as said previously, can be ascribed to the lack of one fixed rule to follow. However, they also share a number of similarities. None of the churches makes use of a chronological arrangement, demonstrating that in the Palaiologan period priority was given to narrative devices, thematic approaches, and to the Orthodox liturgical calendar. Especially the latter played a crucial role, as established by the frequent combination of the triad of the Samaritan Woman, the Paralytic, and the Blind Born, the iconography of the Marriage at Cana and its pairing with the sacrament of the Eucharist, suggesting that these associations were commonly acknowledged and easily recognizable.

Bearing in mind the analogous trends in the layout of the Cycle, and the brief period it proliferated, I believe that there is indeed a link between these three monuments. Should these similarities be ascribed to a Constantinopolitan influence? Was the capital the centre patrons looked to? The *ktētors* belong to the same high-ranking intellectual group surrounding Andronikos II. Yet, they played very different roles in society: Pachomios was the abbot of the Brontochion Monastery, Michael Glabas Tarchaneiotes was a general in Thessalonike and Theodoros Metochites was the emperor's 'prime minister' in Constantinople. They also travelled extensively between these three cities: Metochites spent a great deal of time in Thessalonike, and Glabas Tarchaneiotes

re-decorated the Pammakaristos church in Constantinople. Andronikos II was very close to Pachomios and granted him numerous privileges. Thus, it is clear that there is no need to pinpoint one geographic location, such as the capital, as the only place of artistic creativity. On the contrary, it seems plausible that the patrons themselves were the cradle of this cultural and intellectual engagement, promoting artistic endeavours in different cities.

In a similar way, the *ktētors* used the Cycle as a vehicle to express common values, yet in a personalized manner. In St. Euthymios the audience experiences the comparison between Christ and St. Euthymios and their deeds, as models to follow; in Chora and in the Aphenliko the viewer is addressed through the narration as a witness, focusing his attention not only on Christ but also on the sick person. The Cycle became a vehicle to express different meanings, coinciding with Andronikos II's new religious policy, connecting the religious and marvellous element to everyday life. In Chora, the miracles are linked to the patron and are grouped together as a didactic and liturgical device giving hope to the viewer. Finally, in the Aphenliko, miracles are not associated just to one person and are not just a matter of hope, but they become real, a reminder of the active spring of the *zōodochos pēgē*. These Cycles do not express contradictory messages, but are variations of the same thoughts and values. The patrons altered the iconography, disposition, and the layout of the episodes in order to convey different meanings, but they are all the outcomes of a new idea of the miraculous, where both the patron and the beholder could identify himself with Christ and the sick man.

PART 5

Reception & Response



Constantinople and Alexandria between the Seventh and Eighth Centuries: The Representation of Byzantium in Christian Sources from Conquered Egypt

Cecilia Palombo

Introduction

When the Muslim armies occupied Egypt (639–641),¹ the province had been experiencing a prolonged period of instability.² It is likely that the Muslim conquest had been preceded by years of gradual penetration and diplomatic contacts, possibly leading to the payment of a heavy tribute by the Egyptian governor to the Muslims, as several sources suggest.³ This appearance of a new political and military protagonist on the Egyptian scene had added to the difficulties left behind by the Sasanian occupation of 618–629, which in turn had followed years of urban factionalism in support of Phocas' or Heraclius'

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- 1 Alfred Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion* (Oxford, 1902); Phil Booth, "The Muslim Conquest of Egypt Reconsidered," *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (2013), 639–670; Robert Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, 1997), pp. 574–590.
 - 2 The term 'Roman' will be used in what follows with reference to the political entity based in Constantinople, mainly on account of the fact that this is the term found in all Greek, Arabic and Coptic sources of the period, including those that will be mentioned here. The same criterion appears less useful concerning the other political entity involved; 'Muslims' is in fact scarcely attested in sources from the first two centuries of Islam. This term will therefore be used as a historiographical convention to indicate the ruling élite of Egypt, assuming that this was characterized by a certain degree of internal coherence, and shared social, linguistic and religious features, but without implying any binding definition of 'Islam' in religious or ethnic terms.
 - 3 See Hoyland, *Seeing*, pp. 574–581; Benjamin Isaac, "The Army in the Late Roman East," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East, vol. III: States, Resources and Armies*, ed. Averil Cameron (Princeton, 1992), pp. 125–155, at pp. 129–134; Butler, *The Arab Conquest*, pp. 481–483; Cyril Mango, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History* (Washington, D.C., 1990), p. 189.

claims to the throne (608–610).⁴ Political factionalism naturally intertwined with questions of religious allegiance; two independent archbishops had in fact coexisted in Alexandria since the late fifth century, and documentary papyri confirm the creation of two parallel hierarchies, with various degrees of formalization, on Egyptian territory.⁵ Even if one disregards the accounts of persecutions against the non-Chalcedonians scattered in literary sources, and assumes a high level of flexibility and diversification of solutions at a local level, there is evidence for at least occasional tensions arising between neighbouring communities, and even between competing groups within the same community.⁶ In some cases, issues of religious identity overlapped with social and geographic categories. It seems, for example, that diocesan centres would be more easily overseen by Chalcedonians than the villages and monastic centres of the desert fringes.⁷

Such a complex background helps to frame the Muslim takeover in Egypt, and the important changes that took place thereafter, in a context of transformation of pre-existing social balances. Telling the story of how Egypt moved from Roman to Muslim dominion entails asking questions about social metamorphoses and communal identities; it requires investigations into how historical changes were perceived by the contemporaries, and how they contributed to the construction of new boundaries between social groups and religious communities.⁸ Thus, the question of how Egyptian sources represented the

4 Walter Kaegi, "Egypt on the Eve of the Muslim Conquest," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, ed. Carl Petry, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1998), 1:34–61; Phil Booth, *Crisis of Empire: Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 2013), pp. 49–59.

5 Ewa Wipszycka, "Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche in Egitto dalla fine del III all'inizio dell'VIII secolo," in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends. Study in Honor of Tito Orlandi*, ed. Alberto Camplani and Paola Buzi (Rome, 2011), pp. 219–271, at pp. 252–253; idem, "The Institutional Church," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. Roger Bagnall (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 331–349, at pp. 331–332.

6 Wipszycka, "Institutional Church," pp. 346–349; James Goehring, "Constructing and Enforcing Orthodoxy: Evidence from the Coptic Panegyrics on Abraham of Farshut," in *Heilige Berge und Wüsten: Byzanz und sein Umfeld. Referate auf dem 21. Internationalen Kongress für Byzantinistik–London 21.26 August 2006*, ed. Peter Soustal (Wien, 2009), pp. 9–15.

7 Wipszycka, "Le istituzioni," p. 257; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Egypt," in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* (henceforth *OHLA*), ed. John F. Johnson (Oxford, 2012), pp. 195–223, at p. 206.

8 See especially Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Hagiography in Coptic," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Farnham, 2011), pp. 323–343, at pp. 334–335; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Historiography, Hagiography, and the Making of the Coptic 'Church of the Martyrs' in Early Islamic Egypt," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006), 65–86.

Roman Empire brings about yet other questions: how did they represent the severance of Egypt from Constantinople? In which historical context was such severance being re-elaborated? And how is this relevant for the re-shaping of Egypt's identity under Muslim rule?

A traditional view of the Muslim conquest of Egypt tends to emphasise religious sectarianism and the separation between two, by then irreconcilable, Christianities: one Miaphysite and Egyptian, often identified with the Coptic language; the other Chalcedonian and Roman, generally identified with Greek.⁹ In fact, the voice of Chalcedonian groups virtually disappeared from Egypt after the conquest, which leads one to wonder to what extent religious denominations depended on political balances of power.¹⁰ At first glance, literary sources from the early Islamic period – which are overwhelmingly non-Chalcedonian and written in Coptic – seem to suggest a favourable attitude towards the conquerors, or at least disaffection for the 'Roman yoke', as one author put it. On the basis of these sources, the still common view attributed to 'the Copts' is an initial enthusiasm for the Muslims' takeover, followed by a disappointment emergent only towards the beginning of the eighth century, when fiscal and social conditions harshened.¹¹ Criticising this picture,

9 Cf. Tito Orlandi, "Literature," in *The Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia* (henceforth *CCE*) (Claremont Colleges Digital Libraries, 2011–); idem, "Letteratura copta e Cristianesimo nazionale egiziano," in *L'Egitto cristiano: aspetti e problemi in età tardo-antica*, ed. Alberto Camplani (Rome, 1997), pp. 39–120, at p. 96; Alberto Camplani, "L'identità del patriarcato alessandrino, tra storia e rappresentazione," *Adamantius* 12 (2006), 8–42, at 12–13. On the 'nationalist' thesis, see Arnold Jones, "Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?," *Journal of Theological Studies* 10 (1959), 280–298, at 287–291; William Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement: Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and the Sixth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. ix–xiv. Also, cf. Stephen Davis, *The Early Coptic Papacy: The Egyptian Church and its Leadership in Late Antiquity* (Cairo, 2004), pp. 85–128.

10 Bernard Palme, "Political Identity Versus Religious Distinction? The Case of Egypt in the Later Roman Empire," in *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World: The West, Byzantium, and the Islamic World, 300–1100*, ed. Walter Pohl et al. (Farnham, 2012), pp. 81–100. On doctrine and dissent, see Phil Booth, *Crisis*, pp. 186–224; Robert Hoyland and Averil Cameron, "Introduction," in *Doctrine and Debate in the East Christian World, 300–1500*, ed. Averil Cameron and Robert Hoyland (Farnham, 2011), pp. xi–xlix; Christian Decobert, "Formes et substances des construits identitaires," in *Valeur et distance: identités et sociétés en Egypte*, ed. idem (Paris, 2000), pp. 9–38.

11 This general framework can be found presupposed, for example, in Alfred Butler, *The Arab Conquest*, pp. 439–449; Tito Orlandi, "La letteratura copta e la storia dell'Egitto cristiano," in *Le Antiche Chiese Orientali. Storia e Letteratura*, ed. Paolo Siniscalco (Rome, 2006), pp. 85–117, at pp. 108–110; idem, "Un testo copto sulla dominazione araba d'Egitto,"

Bernhard Palme has recently exhorted scholars to turn towards administrative documents, from which religious sectarianism is in fact virtually absent.¹² Yet does this imply that literary sources are unreliable?¹³

This apparent conflict can be solved by acknowledging the particular perspective and function of religious texts. As a matter of fact, Christian literature from early Islamic Egypt has not received as yet the same attention that has been devoted to other periods, for instance, the immediately preceding Roman period, or to other contemporary Near-eastern literatures such as that composed in Syriac.¹⁴ One basic question has often escaped scholars: *when* were Egyptian texts on the conquests composed?

Homilies, often in the form of *encomia*, hagiographies and martyrologies represent the bulk of the literature produced in Egypt in the first two centuries of Muslim rule,¹⁵ in addition to one *Chronicle* and to two patriarchal histories. The latter survived as part of the monumental *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* (*HP*), which resulted from the harmonization of various sources centred on the Alexandrian See, probably on the initiative of the Alexandrian notable Mawḥūb b. Manṣūr b. Mufarrij (died c.1100).¹⁶ They witness to the

in *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Studies, Roma 22–26 September 1980*, ed. Tito Orlandi and Frederik Wisse (Rome, 1985), pp. 225–234, at pp. 230–232; René-George Coquin, *Livre de la consécration du sanctuaire de Benjamin* (Cairo, 1975), pp. 43–47. For a more balanced view, see Palme, “Political Identity,” pp. 83–85; Johannes Den Heijer, “La conquête arabe vue par les historiens coptes,” in *Valeur et distance*, pp. 227–245; Walter Kaegi, “Initial Byzantine Reactions to the Arab Conquest,” *Church History* 38/2 (1969), 139–149.

12 Palme, “Political Identity,” pp. 94–96.

13 Cf. Butler, *The Arab Conquest*, p. xx.

14 Cf. Heike Behlmer, <http://www.copticcongress2012.uniroma1.it>. On Near-eastern writings from the early Islamic period, cf. Hoyland, *Seeing*, pp. 1–52; *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History* 1, ed. David Thomas et al. (Leiden, 2009); *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*, ed. Emmanouela Grypeou et al. (Leiden, 2006); Sidney Griffith, *The Beginning of Christian Theology in Arabic: Muslim-Christian Encounters in the Early Islamic Period* (Aldershot, 2002).

15 Anne Bouvarel-Boud’hors, “The Coptic Tradition,” in *OHLA*, pp. 224–246; Papaconstantinou, “Hagiography,” pp. 323–325; Tito Orlandi, *Omellerie copte: scelte e tradotte, con una introduzione sulla letteratura copta* (Turin, 1981), pp. 6–24.

16 See Mark Swanson, “George the Archdeacon” and “John the Deacon,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations* 1, pp. 234–238, 317–321; Johannes Den Heijer, “Réflexions sur la composition de l’*Histoire des Patriarches d’Alexandrie*: les auteurs des sources coptes,” in *Coptic Studies: Acts of the Third International Congress of Coptic Studies, Warsaw, 20–25 August 1984*, ed. Włodzimierz Godlewski (Warsaw, 1990), pp. 107–113. On *HP*, see especially Johannes Den Heijer, *Mawḥūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij et l’historiographie copto-arabe*:

‘post-conquest’ phase of the Alexandrian historiographical tradition. Although most probably composed in Coptic, Christian sources from the early Islamic period were often preserved in Arabic translations, and the Arabic version is at times the only one available today.¹⁷

To complicate things, most of the homiletic literature is pseudepigraphic, that is, they are attributed to past or even fictitious authorities, and, as a consequence, are not easily datable.¹⁸ ‘Cycles’ of pseudepigraphic hagiographies in Coptic are thought to have arisen from the fifth century, whereas the creation of ‘cycles’ of pseudepigraphic homilies – labelled simply ‘pseudepigrapha’ by Tito Orlandi – flourished between the seventh and the ninth centuries.¹⁹ A significant number of pseudepigrapha have been transmitted in the Sahidic dialect in ninth-century manuscripts from the libraries of the monasteries of al-Ḥāmūlī and Sūhāj; their dating to the Islamic period is inferable from explicit or allusive mentions of Islamic rule, as well as from literary features, such as dependence on other works, language features, and comparison with documentary sources concerning the cult of saints, the establishment of sanctuaries, and even elements of taxation.²⁰

étude sur la composition de l'Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie (Lovanii, 1989); Perrine Pilette, “L’histoire des Patriarches d’Alexandrie: Une nouvelle évaluation de la configuration du texte et recensions,” *Le Muséon* 126/3–4 (2013), 419–450.

17 This is the case, for example, of the Pseudo-Theophilus’ *In honour of Peter and Paul*, or the Arabic *Life of Shenute*. See Jos van Lent, “Réactions coptes au défi de l’Islam: l’homélie de Théophile d’Alexandrie en l’honneur de Saint Pierre et de Saint Paul”, in *Études coptes XII. Quatorzième journée d’études (Rome, 11–13 juin 2009)*, *Collection de l’Université de Strasbourg. Études d’archéologie et d’histoire ancienne. Cahiers de la Bibliothèque copte* 18, ed. Anne Boud’hors and Catherine Louis (Strasbourg, 2013), pp. 134–148; Jos Van Lent, “The Apocalypse of Shenute” and “The Arabic Homily of Pseudo-Athanasius of Alexandria,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations* 1, pp. 184–185, p. 259. In other cases, the Arabic witnesses appear to depend on a lost Coptic copy, and they are thus essential to complete the information given by the fewer Coptic testimonies that survived: Coquin, *Livre*, pp. 13–24.

18 Orlandi, *Omélie Copte*, pp. 6–7; Bouvarel-Boud’hors, “The Coptic Tradition,” p. 228. See also Roelof Van Der Broek, *Pseudo-Cyril of Jerusalem. On the Life and the Passion of Christ. A Coptic Apocryphon* (Leiden, 2013). Questions of authorship should always be taken into serious consideration. Nonetheless, they should not lead to dismiss this corpus as incapable of providing historical information, or even to ignore it altogether. Cf. the very limited list of Coptic works from the Islamic period given by Stephen Emmel in “Coptic Literature in the Byzantine and Early Islamic World,” in *Egypt in the Byzantine World*, pp. 83–99, at pp. 96–97, where only ‘original’ works were considered.

19 Orlandi, *Omélie copte*, 6.

20 Orlandi, “Literature”; idem, “La letteratura,” pp. 113–117; *Omélie copte*, pp. 13–14; Arietta Papaconstantinou, *Le culte des saints en Egypte: des Byzantines aux Abbasides: l’apport des*

The peculiarities of this literature – pseudepigraphy, interdependence, lack of theological discussions, perpetuation of stereotypes – are partly at the basis of scholars' scant awareness of Copto-Arabic religious texts from the post-conquest period, and the prevailing conservatism in their interpretation. The dating of texts allegedly showing intolerance towards Constantinople, for example, has hardly been ever discussed. As a consequence, Christian sources from the Marwanid (684–750) or even early-Abbasid period have been at times anachronistically mentioned as contemporary witnesses to the conquest.²¹ Similarly, questions of geography and the provenance of religious sources have been often overlooked.²² Do religious sources show the same attitude towards the rulers when they come from Alexandria or from other centres? What social dynamics lie behind the representation of political powers?

In this paper, the question of the attitude shown by Egyptian literary sources towards the Roman Empire will be re-discussed by framing it into a long-term development – namely, the construction of a new identity for the Miaphysite Church of Egypt under Muslim rule. This identity was built outside of the Roman *oecumene* by authors who were at the same time Christian religious leaders and subjects of an Islamic polity. For reasons of space, only few of the extant sources will be discussed in the illustration of this point.

Interpreting the Conquest in Historiographical Works

It is reasonable to assume that there was not a single or uniform reaction to the Muslim conquest of Egypt. The degree of resistance, inertia or support must have varied significantly from individual to individual, family to family, town to town. Geographic categories, in this respect, should be considered as well; the reaction of the urban élites gravitating around Alexandria, for example, was not necessarily the same as that of monastic groups in Upper Egypt. Strikingly, however, literary sources do share a similar interpretative framework to explain the events. The same picture, stemming from the same roots, developed in two main different branches: one flowing into the historiographical tradition focused on the Miaphysite See of Alexandria, the other into the wider field

inscriptions et des papyrus grecs et coptes (Paris, 2001), pp. 33–34; Antonella Campagnano, *Omélie copte sulla Passione, la Croce e la Vergine* (Milan, 1980), pp. 10–14.

21 Johannes Den Heijer, “Coptic Historiography in the Fāṭimid, Ayyūbid and Early Mamlūk Period,” *Medieval Encounters* 2/1 (1996), 67–98, at 67–68.

22 David Johnson, “Anti-Chalcedonian Polemics in Coptic Texts: 451–641,” in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, ed. Birger Pearson (Philadelphia, 1986), pp. 216–243, at p. 219.

of Near Eastern apocalypticism. This second branch, in turn, cannot be fully understood unless it is contextualised in the narrower genre of Copto-Arabic homiletics.

As for historiography, the *Chronicle* attributed to John bishop of Nikiou probably represents the work chronologically closest to the conquest period. Written in the late-seventh century in Greek or Coptic, it has been preserved only in a seventeenth-century Ge'ez translation from Arabic.²³ Despite the inevitable filters and alterations created by its successive translations, John's *Chronicle* remains among the most precious sources of the early Islamic period. Among other things, it offers an articulated version of how the urban ecclesiastical élite of the Delta would interpret the Roman defeat: in a nutshell, this was a consequence of the Church's fatal mistakes since the synod of Chalcedon, and a divine punishment inflicted on the empire because of the transgressions of many an emperor.²⁴ As already noted, this interpretation does not imply any rejection of the empire as an institution, nor does it exclude Egypt from the calamity that shook the world as the Muslims came to power.²⁵ A religious man and a religious leader, the bishop of Nikiou did not show any pleasure in the fragmentation of the Christian world. Rather, his interpretation included the recent upheaval within a wider *oikonomia*, by leading back historical events to God's will and sovereignty. John condemned the behaviour of individual emperors, rather than the empire as a whole, in particular attributing the political weakness that paved the way for the Muslim triumph to Heraclius' failure in guaranteeing social harmony among his subjects.²⁶

A similar attitude can be recognized in a slightly later text, again written by a representative of the urban ecclesiastical class of Lower Egypt. This is the patriarchal history of Jirjah the Archdeacon, a monk from Xoïs/Sakhā who occupied important administrative positions within the Patriarchate between the offices of Simeon I (r. 689–701) and Alexandros II (r. 704–29), and probably wrote his book in the 730's, as can be inferred by a series of editorial notes left by his redactor. Jirjah's history, which covers approximately the period from Marcianus (r. 450–57) to Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik (r. 715–17), was in fact

23 John of Nikiou, *Chronicle*, ed. Herman Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean évêque de Nikiou* (Paris, 1883), in which a French translation is provided as well; *The Chronicle of John* (ca. 690 AD), *Coptic bishop of Nikiu* trans. Robert Charles (London and Oxford, 1916).

24 Cf. John of Nikiou, 115.9, p. 186; 117.7, p. 189; 120.1–2, p. 191; 120.34, p. 193. See H. A. Drake, "A Coptic Version of the Discovery of the Holy Sepulchre," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 20/4 (1979), 381–392, at 389–390; Jones, "Were Ancient Heresies," pp. 288–289.

25 Drake, "A Coptic Version," p. 389.

26 John of Nikiou, 115.9, p. 182; 121.2, p. 200.

continued in the 760's or 770's by a second author, Yūḥannā the Deacon, as the latter informed us.²⁷ Both works were probably translated into Arabic sometime between the ninth and the tenth century, and subsequently merged into *HP*.²⁸

Jirjah's remarks on the Roman loss of Egypt are framed into the famous hagiography of the patriarch Benjamin I (r. 623–62). According to this account, as preserved in the earliest extant version of *HP*, when 'the king Muḥammad' took possession of Syria

[...] the Lord ceased to support the nation (*jins* = *genos*) of the Romans in front of him, on account of their corrupt faith and the excommunications that they had attached to it since the Forefathers accepted the council of Chalcedon.²⁹

According to Jirjah, in response to the Muslims' expansion Heraclius assembled his troops from all over Egypt and resolved to pay a tribute (*baqt*), thus apparently preventing the Muslims from invading the province.³⁰ Heraclius is not

27 *History of the Patriarchs of the Church of Alexandria*, ed. Basil T. Evetts, in *Patrologia Orientalis* vol. 5:1 (Paris, 1904), pp. 90–91; cf. the 'primitive' version, *Hambourg arabe* 304, fac-simile by Christian Seybold, *Alexandrinische Patriarchengeschichte von S. Marcus bis Michael I., 61–767: nach der ältesten 1266 geschriebenen Hamburger Handschrift* (Hamburg, 1912), pp. 120, 138, 152. See David Johnson, "Further Remarks on the History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria," *Oriens Christianus* 61 (1977), 103–116, at 113–114; Den Heijer, "Réflexions," p. 110. On the two redactions of *HP*, see Den Heijer, *Mawḥūb*, pp. 19–80; Pilette, "L'histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie".

28 On account of a number of terminological peculiarities, it is my opinion that the first Arabic translation of Jirjah and Yūḥannā's histories, as witnessed by the manuscript *Hambourg arabe* 304, was realized earlier than the eleventh century, when those works were incorporated into *HP*.

29 *Hambourg arabe* 304 (Seybold), p. 99.

30 *Hambourg arabe* 304, p. 99; cf. John of Nikiou, 122–123, pp. 177–180. The term *baqt* (from *pakton*) was in use in early Islamic Egypt with reference to diplomatic treaties involving the payment of a tribute. From the early-eighth century, it also indicated a tax on newly cultivated lands. This suggests a rear-projection into the conquest times of the system familiar to the author. See Martin Hinds, Sakkout Hamdi, "A Letter from the Governor of Egypt to the King of Nubia and Muqarra Concerning Egyptian-Nubian Relations in 141/758," in *Studia Arabica et Islamica. Festschrift for Iḥsān 'Abbās on his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Wadad al-Qadi (Beyrut, 1981), pp. 209–229; Petra Sijpesteijn, "Landholding Patterns in Early Islamic Egypt," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9/1 (2009), 120–133, at 124; Jean Gascou, « Les grands domaines, la cité et l'état en Égypte byzantine, » *Travaux et Mémoires* 9 (1985), 1–90, at 7.

defined in explicitly negative terms in this passage; however, it is immediately clear that his attempts to escape God's wrath (*ghaḍab al-Rabb*), are destined to fail.³¹ In addition, he is depicted as the victim of a wicked counsellor, the governor of Egypt Kyros – a recurring motif in post-conquest sources, which to a certain extent served to downplay the emperor's personal responsibility.

That there is an essential connection between the Chalcedonians' blunder and the Muslim invasion is further remarked by the following anecdote about Benjamin I (d. 662):

[Benjamin] was fleeing from him [Kyros], moving from place to place and hiding himself secretly in churches. Thus the king of the Muslims, when his companions mentioned to him the condition of Anbā Benjamin, dispatched a general with a military detachment towards the land of Egypt; and the name of that general was 'Amr b. al 'Āṣ.³²

Just as John of Nikiou, Jirjah included the Muslim conquest within a wider divine scheme to punish Christians, and in particular the emperor, for their 'unorthodoxy'. This centrality of Chalcedon as the origin of God's anger was a traditional *topos*, well-rooted in the historiographical tradition of the Alexandrian patriarchate, and already central in the 'plerophoric' literature.³³ Similarly, the idea that individual emperors were responsible for the decadence of the empire can be found in a number of sources, both historiographical and homiletic, since the sixth century;³⁴ Diocletian's persecution, for example, was chosen as the beginning of the Egyptian 'era of the martyrs', which came in use in the early Islamic times.³⁵ Writers of the post-conquest period naturally inserted themselves into an established narrative, the essence of which was that, since 451, Alexandria had stood out as the only defence from the 'heresy' of the Chalcedonians and the emperors who had supported them. Significantly, Jirjah began his history with the emperor Marcianus' reign, tracing back to Chalcedon the symbolic rise of the 'orthodox' Church of Egypt.

31 *Hambourg arabe* 304, p. 99.

32 *Hambourg arabe* 304, p. 99.

33 Orlandi, "Literature"; idem, "Coptic Literature," in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, pp. 51–81, at pp. 73–74; Alberto Camplani, "La percezione della crisi religiosa calcedonese in alcuni testi storici e agiografici prodotti negli ambienti dell'episcopato di Alessandria," *Adamantius* 19 (2013), 240–255, at 241–242.

34 On 'anti-Marcian' feelings before the conquest, see Camplani, "La percezione," pp. 242–248.

35 Leslie MacCoull and Klaas Wosp, "The Era of the Martyrs," in *Miscellanea Papyrologica in occasione del bicentenario dell'edizione Charta Borgiana. Parte seconda*, ed. Mario Capasso et al. (Firenze, 1990), pp. 375–408.

What is important to stress, however, is that before the conquest neither Diocletian's persecution nor the 'impieties' committed by other emperors – such as, notably, Julian – had undermined the idea that there was an essential tie between Christianity and the Roman Empire. Contrary to every previous historiographical work centred on the Alexandrian See, the histories composed by John of Nikiou, Jirjah the Archdeacon, and Yūḥannā the Deacon were written by religious leaders who found themselves excluded from the empire and separated from Constantinople. From an Egyptian perspective, history had proved the link between Christianity and Rome not to be unbreakable, and Jirjah's history is in fact rich in acknowledgements of the prerogatives of *non-Roman* authorities concerning the Church.³⁶ Similarly to Jirjah, Mennas of Nikiou, author of a *Life* of the Patriarch Isaak (r. 690–92), acknowledged the involvement of the Muslim government in the affairs of the Alexandrian community and made use of stories about the construction or destruction of churches and sanctuaries to either support or criticize political figures.³⁷

In spite of the filters of time and translation, *HP* does preserve precious elements of Jirjah's point-of-view on his times;³⁸ but this point-of-view was that of an eighth-century member of the Egyptian Church and a subject of the Umayyads (in Egypt r. 659–750).³⁹ It is likely that he never experienced Roman rule, never saw Alexandria when this was the undisputed heart of Egyptian urbanity, and never knew administrative relations untied from the authority of the *amīr* in the new capital of Babylon/Fuṣṭāṭ. Mentions of the Romans in works from the Umayyad period should thus not be read as Christian witnesses to the Muslim conquest. Rather, they offer a representation of the history of the Alexandrian patriarchate and its relation to Constantinople as constructed by ecclesiastical circles under non-Christian and non-Roman rule.

End of Empire, End of Times

This general idea was developed in another typical genre of Copto-Arabic literature, the homily, where it was naturally inscribed into polemical and parenetic passages. Since homilies from this period were generally attributed to Church Fathers and fictitiously projected into the past, references to the conquest or to the Muslims were ingeniously framed into dreams or apocalyptic visions.

36 Cf. *Hambourg arabe* 304, pp. 100–01, 120–21, 133.

37 Hoyland, *Seeing*, pp. 150–51.

38 Den Heijer, "La conquête," p. 228.

39 Gerald Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate A.D. 661–750*, 2nd ed. (London, 2000), pp. 24–34.

As a result, Coptic homiletics received and re-elaborated themes typical of 'Byzantine' apocalypticism. In fact, Copto-Arabic texts have engendered curiosity almost exclusively because of their relationship with non-Coptic apocalypses and, thereby, their inclusion into a wider 'Eastern Christian apocalyptic tradition' – a focus which has caused scholars' knowledge of this literature to narrow down to only part of the available corpus.⁴⁰

As shown by Paul Alexander, Christian apocalypticism in the early Islamic period saw an interesting development in the transmission of the 'Last Emperor' legend. According to this motif, the election of the last emperor of Rome, made recognizable by given signs, would announce the end of times and precede the coming of the Antichrist.⁴¹ The events of the seventh century, including the loss of the Holy Land, the momentous restoration of the True Cross to Jerusalem, and the rise of the Islamic caliphate, raised new speculations and expectancies among eastern Christians. As a result, Heraclius came to be identified with the Last Emperor, and the rise of Islam to be read in Biblical apocalyptic terms.⁴² The prevalence of this theme between the seventh and the eighth centuries was greatly increased by the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, which firstly used it in relation to the Muslim conquests, and subsequently spread in the Near East.⁴³ Contrary to writings from the Fatimid and later periods, however, the earliest 'apocalyptic' homilies from Islamic Egypt reveal no clear interplay with Pseudo-Methodius, nor do they mention directly the Roman emperor. Copto-Arabic homilies such as Pseudo-Athanasius' *To the clergy* (or *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Athanasius*), Pseudo-Athanasius' *On Luke 11.5*, and Pseudo-Cyril's *On Revelation*, show that apocalyptic expectations were still alive in Egyptian society well into the eighth-century;⁴⁴ nevertheless, the conquests had passed, Muslim rule was thriving, and Rome had lost its crucial

40 Cf. Francisco Javier Martinez, "La literatura apocalíptica y las primeras reacciones cristianas a la conquista islámica en Oriente," in *Europa y el Islam*, ed. Gonzalo Anez Alvares (Madrid, 2003), pp. 143–222; idem, "Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius" (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., 1985), pp. 247–590; Jos Van Lent, "Les apocalypses coptes de l'époque arabe: quelque réflexions," *Études coptes* 5 (1998), 181–195; Christian Décobert, "Sur l'arabisation et l'islamisation de l'Égypte médiévale," in *Itinéraires d'Égypte*, ed. idem (Cairo, 1992), pp. 273–300, at pp. 288–299; Hoyland, *Seeing*, pp. 282–285; Orlandi, "Un testo copto," pp. 227–230.

41 Paul Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 151–185.

42 Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 34; Booth, *Crisis*, pp. 158–159.

43 Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 4–33.

44 Pseudo-Athanasius, *To the Clergy*, ed. Javier Martinez, "Eastern Christian Apocalyptic," pp. 247–590; Pseudo-Athanasius, *On Luke 11.5*, trans. Tito Orlandi, *Omélie copte*, pp. 48–57; Pseudo-Cyril, *On Revelation*, ibidem, pp. 124–144.

salvific role. While lying in wait of God's intervention, the Church of Egypt redefined itself and its role in history along new lines, outside of the traditional Roman framework. Interestingly, most pseudepigraphic homilies are known from the libraries of the monastery of St. Michael in the Fayyūm and the White Monastery of Sūhāj, thus providing a geographic and social perspective complementary to the above-mentioned history works.⁴⁵

The eighth-century homily *To the clergy*, surviving in a ninth-century Syriac version and several Arabic translations, is a good example of this early Copto-Arabic 'apocalypticism'.⁴⁶ The text includes a long apocalyptic section on the Church's decadence, depicting Muslim rule as a divine punishment for the dissolution of the clergy. The preacher condemns the clergy's involvement in 'venal' activities, such as trade, and their cooperation with the authorities:

Keep yourself away from any deceiving discourse of the heretics, those on account of whose actions the wrath of God will overcome the world. I mean Arius, whose mouth is full of luring words, and all the dissenters. And away from all the bishops who cooperate with them. [...] Be aware not to mingle with the unbelieving heretics! Let your slipping away from them be similar to people's fleeing away in face of the Dragon (*al-tinnīn*).⁴⁷ And do not take part into their affairs.

[...] For at that time many bishops and monks will be living in towns, serving the authorities in various positions, like people of the world. For this reason God has submitted them to those nations.⁴⁸

At the same time, the condemnation of the Church and, implicitly, the empire, seems to target individuals, rather than institutions:

And there will be at that time many heretics [...], and kings will arise who will corrupt the orthodox faith. Bishops will fear the wrath of the

45 Orlandi, *Omélie copte*, pp. 47, 124–125; Campagnano, *Omélie copte*, 14–20. See Stephen Emmel, "The Library of the Monastery of the Archangel Michael at Phantou (al-Hamuli)," in *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis*, ed. Martine Krause and Gawdat Gabra (Cairo, 2005), pp. 45–67.

46 Martinez, "Eastern Christian", pp. 247–75.

47 This is probably a topical allusion to the Justinianic plague, which disappeared from Islamic lands by mid-eighth century. See Daniel Odgen, *Drakon: Dragon, Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 310 (footnote 1), 383–399; Peregrine Horden, "Mediterranean Plague in the Age of Justinian," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 134–160.

48 Pseudo-Athanasius, *To the Clergy*, 2.2–3, pp. 293–95; 8, p. 348 (my translation).

kings, and will corrupt the statutes of the orthodox faith; except for the See of Saint Mark alone, which will preserve the confession of faith for which I have endured all this suffering – I, your father Athanasius.⁴⁹

The author explains explicitly this corruption of orthodoxy, by connecting the Dyophysite creed, which ‘fragmented’ the nature of God, to the fragmentation of the Roman Empire.

The rest of the bishops will be at variance with the faith: they will divide the Unity of the Holy Trinity into two natures, after the union which is ineffable [...] And after this, God the Merciful will become angry, because they altered the orthodox faith. So He will divide the unity of the kingdom of the Romans and their power.⁵⁰

All of this, however, is nothing but a necessary step in the overarching divine *oikonomia* that regulates human destiny. Thus – the homilist reassures his audience – since the Muslims are a pawn in God’s hands, their victory will only be ephemeral. In an apocalyptic happy-ending, “heretics, Jews and nations” will be punished; God will restore orthodoxy and, we may be driven to suppose, an orthodox, rightly-guided empire.⁵¹

The ‘Roman Yoke’ in Christian ‘Umayyad’ Texts

As already mentioned, the so-called *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Athanasius* is not an apocalypse, but rather a homily including an apocalyptic passage. Apocalyptic passages can also be found in Pseudo-Theophilus’ homily *In honour of Peter and Paul*, Pseudo-Cyril’s *On Revelation*, and the Arabic encomium of Shenute, all datable between the early-eighth and the early-ninth century. Understanding this difference allows us to include this homily, and its attitude towards the Romans, in a wider corpus, and thus to compare it with akin texts from the same period. The identification of coherent corpora – such as patriarchal histories and ‘pseudepigrapha’ – is in fact a fundamental premise for reading religious texts from early Islamic Egypt, and for comparing them with earlier texts. Sources on the ‘de-Romanization’ of Egypt usually cited as witnesses of the Muslim conquest, are in fact to be situated more precisely in the Marwanid

49 Pseudo-Athanasius, *To the Clergy*, 8.15, p. 363.

50 Pseudo-Athanasius, *To the Clergy*, 8.15–9.1, pp. 363–334.

51 Pseudo-Athanasius, *To the Clergy*, 11.8, pp. 392–394.

or early-Abbasid times. This basic observation gives them a completely different weight and perspective. Jirjah's history is a brilliant example of how the tradition of patriarchal historiography adapted to the political and cultural changes brought about by the new rule. As a matter of fact, this author wrote of the Roman defeat at a time when the Romans had lost both any control over Egypt and any say concerning the appointment of patriarchs – a matter which Jirjah recognised as legitimately overseen by the Muslim governor.⁵² At a closer reading, his work reveals dynamics of social mobility and political tactics that took place over the first century of Muslim rule. As a consequence, for instance, using his *Life of Benjamin I* as a source on the Muslim conquest appears methodologically problematic.⁵³

The same should be borne in mind in relation to non-historiographical sources; the two branches mentioned at the beginning of this paper are not independent one from another. One example will suffice herein, the Copto-Arabic homily *On the Marriage at Cana*. Attributed to the patriarch Benjamin, this text has been mentioned on occasion as a witness of the favourable reaction of the Miaphysites to the Muslim conquest.⁵⁴ This homily contains various elements of Benjamin's hagiography, including his peregrinations to escape from the persecutions of the governor Kyros. Towards the end, we find the account of his encounter with a holy monk from the monastery of Ennaton, near Alexandria, who foretold him:

“Oh father, in that year the Devil will enter this city and will torment you!⁵⁵ Because the Romans will take control over the land of Egypt and they will persecute you greatly, until they will chase you away from your see.” [...]

But after this God the Compassionate turned toward his Church once again. The laymen rejoiced with us, and we went to Alexandria.⁵⁶

52 Cf. *Hambourg arabe* 304, p. 120–121.

53 Thus, for example, in Butler, *The Arab Conquest*, pp. 439–446; Hugh Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquest. How the Spread of Islam Changed the World we Live In* (London, 2007), pp. 144–167, 351–532; Hoyland, *Seeing*, pp. 132–134, 149–151; Mark Swanson, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt (641–1517)* (Cairo, 2010), pp. 2–10.

54 Cf. Detlef Müller, “Benjamin,” *CCE*; Orlandi, “La letteratura,” pp. 108–110; *Omélie copte*, pp. 267–268; Coquin, *Livre*, pp. 58–59; Emmel, “Coptic Literature,” p. 96.

55 Kyros as ‘the Devil’ also appears in the so-called *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Shenute*, ed. Émile Amélineau, *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne au VII^e siècles* (Paris, 1888–1895), pp. 339–340.

56 Pseudo-Benjamin, *The Marriage at Cana*, ed. Detlef Müller, *Die Homilie über die Hochzeit zu Kana und weitere Schriften des Patriarchen Benjamin I von Alexandrien* (Heidelberg,

To my knowledge, the authenticity of this homily and its dating from mid-seventh century have never been questioned. However, the way in which episodes of Benjamin's life are told suggests strongly that the text received hagiographical narratives about the patriarch. Elements such as Benjamin's peregrination in the desert, his orphanhood, his persecution, Kyros' characterisation as 'the Devil', his experiencing visions, and his final triumph, reproduce Benjamin's holy life as it was famously narrated in Jirjah's history and in the Coptic *Life of Benjamin*.⁵⁷ The spread of this hagiography, especially as preserved in *HP*, was so successful that it influenced scholars up to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.⁵⁸ Besides sharing precise narrative elements with hagiographic works, the homily *On the Marriage at Cana* betrays an encomiastic tone, aiming at celebrating Benjamin as a saint (*qiddīs Allāh*), and presenting his life in terms of martyrdom.⁵⁹ Indeed, this self-celebration is a central feature of the pseudepigrapha.

Altogether, hagiographical elements, the interplay with other texts written in the early Islamic period, and even, possibly, language idioms – such as the choice of God's epithets, "compassionate" and "philanthropic", and the expression "districts of Egypt" echoing the Islamic territorial division – place this homily in the eighth century.⁶⁰ For the purpose of this paper, it is important to highlight the detached attitude shown by the author towards the Romans, here almost a foreign people: since they 'took control' of the country, they are supposed not to be usually in charge of it.

In a similar vein, the author of the homily *In honour of Peter and Paul* – which contains clear allusions to the Muslims and to the issue of apostasy – writes:

As for what Mark planted into the land of Egypt, it will last forever, over all the centuries that are to come on earth. But after another time, God will relieve the yoke of the Romans from the districts of Egypt because of the orthodox faith, and He will raise a powerful nation [*umma*] which will be concerned with the Churches of Christ and will not tread on the

1968), pp. 122–149, at pp. 233–239. Cf. Henri De Vis, *Homélies Copte de la Vaticane. Texte copte publié et traduit* (Haunia, 1922), pp. 53–106.

57 Cf. *Hambourg arabe* 304, pp. 97–105; Émile Amélineau, "Fragments coptes pour servir à l'histoire de la conquête de l'Égypte par les Arabes," *Journal Asiatique*, 8/12 (1888), 361–410, at 361–378.

58 Cf. Den Heijer, "Coptic Historiography," p. 77.

59 Pseudo-Benjamin, *The Marriage*, pp. 122–149.

60 It is possible that the long hagiographical passage was added to an earlier sermon commenting on John 2:1–10, which now represents the first part of the text. At any rate, the homily as it has been transmitted to us should be considered pseudepigraphic.

faith in any way. And God will punish the people of the districts of Egypt by means of this nation, because of their going-astray.⁶¹

These texts show how traditional polemics against the Roman political and ecclesiastical establishment were developed in Miaphysite circles after the end of Roman rule. To some extent, this became a means for ecclesiastical leaders to suggest that, historically, Egyptians had always been loyal to the Muslims. Above all, however, it was the result of a historical situation where the Muslims had represented the only legitimate political authority for many decades. Jirjah's history established a clear and direct link between Muslim rule and the empowerment of 'orthodox' Christians, implicitly describing phenomena of social promotions, as epitomized by the election of Benjamin I by the will of 'Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ. The life of Benjamin is in fact a curious paradigm of how new religious leaders, with sound connections to the monastic environment, accessed important positions in Alexandria which had been previously precluded from them. As noticed by Phil Booth, it is indeed relevant that *HP* insists on the monastic conversions sought by the governor Kyros, which already in Heraclius' times led to a major involvement of monks in the Alexandrian ecclesiastical circles.⁶² On the other hand, the pseudepigrapha – homilies written away from the patriarchate by religious leaders external to the Alexandrian urban élite – more openly polemicized the authorities' political and economic control, even against those who would 'mingle' with them.⁶³

Conclusion

It is of great importance that Christian sources on the Muslim takeover be framed in their post-conquest historical context. This does not mean that veiled expressions of satisfaction for Muslim rule, or enmity for the Chalcedonians, are to be deemed lies consciously forged to please the Muslim authorities. It does mean, however, that they were the result of political, social and cultural developments which occurred over several decades and not at the time of the conquest. Consequently, these sources cannot be read acritically as proofs

61 Pseudo-Theophilus, *In Honour of Peter and Paul*, ed. Henri Fleisch, "Une homélie de Théophile d'Alexandrie en l'honneur de St Pierre et de St Paul," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 10/30 (1935–1936), 371–419, at 393. On this homily, see Jos van Lent, "Réactions coptes".

62 Booth, *Crisis*, p. 208.

63 Cf. Pseudo-Athanasius, *To the Clergy*, 2.2–3, pp. 293–295; Pseudo-Theophilus, *In Honour*, pp. 392–397.

of the political sentiment that animated the Egyptians during the conquest. For the same reason, they should not be treated as evidence of a positive attitude of Christian leaders towards the new, non-Christian rulers.

During the eighth century, the idea that the defeat of the Romans was undertaken by God gradually departed from soteriological interpretations connected to the historical role of the Roman Empire, and became a *topos*, as the homilies of Pseudo-Benjamin and Pseudo-Theophilus show. At the same time, other traditional themes developed as the result of the new situation: the historical isolation of Egypt; the uniqueness and antiquity of Egyptian Christianity; the traditional strength of Egyptians in bearing persecutions and vexations. Homiletic texts from the eighth century are rich in allusions to the difficulties faced by Christians under Muslim rule, and show the fears of monastic religious leaders concerning their lack of social and religious prestige. These texts also abound in descriptions of a mythical past, full of sufferance and glory. The representation of the Romans as *the others* became thus part of the construction of a new religious and political identity for the Christians of Egypt, focussed on an Alexandrian See by then ineluctably severed from Constantinople's destiny.

A Forgotten Translation of Pseudo-Methodius in Eighth-Century Constantinople: New Evidence for the Dispersal of the Greek *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* during the Dark Age Crisis

Christopher Bonura

Though it claims to be the work of the early fourth-century bishop and martyr Methodius, the “both faintly absurd and curiously moving” historical-theological treatise most commonly known as the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was most likely composed in the last decade of the seventh century.¹ In alleging

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- 1 For the quote about the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, see Hugh Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In* (Philadelphia, 2007), p. 348. The exact date of the composition of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* is a matter of contention. One of the scholars who pioneered work on the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, Paul Alexander, placed the date of composition in Syriac somewhere between 644 and 674: Paul Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, 1985), p. 25. Sebastian Brock, however, put it in the last few years of the seventh century, and more recently, such a later date has been preferred: Sebastian Brock, “Syriac Views on Emergent Islam,” in *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society*, ed. G. H. A. Juynboll (Carbondale, 1982), p. 19; Francisco Javier Martinez urges caution about fixing an exact date for the text, considering the complexities involved, but places it tentatively around 688–689: Francisco Javier Martinez, “Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius” (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, 1985), pp. 30–31. Gerrit J. Reinink dates Pseudo-Methodius to the end of the second *fitna*, either 691 or 692: Gerrit J. Reinink, “The Romance of Julian the Apostate as a Source for Seventh-Century Syriac Apocalypses,” in *La Syrie de Byzance a l’Islam, VII–VIII siècles*, ed. Pierre Canivet and Jean-Paul Rey Coquas (Damascus, 1992), p. 85. Reinink makes a strong case that Pseudo-Methodius was writing in the aftermath of the construction of the Dome of the Rock, during the reign of ‘Abd al-Malik: Gerrit J. Reinink, “Early Christian Reactions to the Building of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem,” *Xristianskij Vostok* 2 (2000), 229–241. Hannes Möhring, *Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit: Entstehung, Wandel und Wirkung einer tausendjährigen Weissagung* (Stuttgart, 2000), pp. 75–82, presents a good general overview of the various attempts to date the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, and concludes that it was probably originally composed between 685 and 690, and certainly before the end of 692. More recently, Stephen Shoemaker, “‘The Reign of God has Come’: Eschatology and Empire in Late Antiquity and Early Islam,” *Arabica*, 61/5

to foretell that the Empire of the Christians would utterly destroy all enemies of the Christian faith and once again rule over the earth on the eve of the Second Coming, it struck a chord in both the wider Byzantine commonwealth and the Latin West. As a result, this apocalypse enjoyed enormous influence in the medieval world, and nearly all Byzantine apocalyptic texts written afterwards are heavily influenced by or borrow directly from the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*.

Despite its enormous influence in medieval Western Christendom and Byzantium, thanks to the work of Near Eastern scholars and Byzantinists such as Michael Kmosko, Paul Alexander, and G. J. Reinink, it has now been established beyond doubt that the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was actually composed in the Syriac language, most likely in northern Mesopotamia.² It was composed by a Christian subject of the Islamic Caliphate, perhaps a monk, and was likely written in reaction to the revived strength of the Islamic Empire after its second *fitna* (680–692 AD), or civil war, from which, against all expectation, the Caliphate emerged stronger than ever.³ The victor of that con-

(2014), p. 543 (footnote 83); and idem. "The Tiburtine Sibyl, the Last Emperor, and the Early Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition," in *Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier: The Christian Apocrypha from North American Perspectives; Proceedings from the 2013 York University Christian Apocrypha Symposium*, ed. Tony Burke and Christoph Marksches (Eugene, 2015), pp. 228–229, argues for returning to a mid-seventh century dating for the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, but his arguments are not fully convincing. Some time between the late 680s and early years of the 690s remains the most widely accepted date for the original composition of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, and I am inclined to agree with follow this dating of the work.

2 Michael Kmosko presented his discovery of the Syriac version in Vaticanus syriacus 58 and suggested that it was the original version of Pseudo-Methodius at a lecture on June 13, 1930, at the Sixth German Orientalists' Day in Vienna, promising to follow this up with a monograph on Pseudo-Methodius. Kmosko presents the lecture in his article, "Das Rätsel des Pseudomethodius," *Byzantion* 6 (1931), 273–296, though he died the following year before he completed the monograph. Alexander gave further evidence that Syriac was the original language: Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 31–33. More decisive proof has been presented by G. J. Reinink, "Ismael, der Wildesel in der Wüste: Zur Typologie der Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodios," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 75 (1982), pp. 342–344.

3 See especially G. J. Reinink, "Pseudo-Methodius und die Legende vom römischen Endkaiser," in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke, D. Verhelst, and Andries Welkenhuysen (Leuven, 1988), pp. 82–111; idem, "Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History in Response to the Rise of Islam," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East I: Problems in the Literary Source Material*, eds Averil Cameron and Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton, 1992), pp. 149–187; Robert Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, 1997), pp. 263–267;

flict, Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 685–705), embraced a policy of explicit state support for Islam and challenged the status of Christianity in his empire. He did this, for example, by removing Christian imagery from the coinage and replacing it with aniconic statements of Islamic faith, and by overseeing the construction of the Dome of the Rock with its inscriptions that openly challenged the concept of the triune Christian God, calling on believers to embrace the undivided God preached by the Prophet Muhammad.⁴

It is in this context that scholars place the composition of Pseudo-Methodius’ unique discourse on history. According to the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, the Ishmaelites – the term the author primarily uses for the Arabs – came out of the desert in the times of the Old Testament and overran all the nations of the earth before being driven back to Yathrib, later known among Muslims as Medina, by the Israelites under Gideon. Yet Pseudo-Methodius, pretending to be the early saint foretelling the events in advance, predicts they will come again out of the desert of Yathrib in the final age of the world after the Persian Empire falls, and none will be safe from their devastation and tyranny. They will commit many atrocities, and Pseudo-Methodius suggests that some Christians in this period of uncertainty will begin to lose their faith and apostatize from Christianity, the implication being that they will convert to Islam – though Pseudo-Methodius never refers to Islam by name and stresses that the Ishmaelites are nothing more than glorified pagans, making literary allusions suggesting a comparison of their rule to the time of Julian the Apostate.⁵ According to Pseudo-Methodius, however, the conquest of the Ishmaelites is a temporary chastisement, and the Kingdom of the Christians, which he also

Lutz Greisiger, “Pseudo-Methodius (Syriac),” in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, Volume 1 (600–900)*, eds David Thomas and Barbara Roggema (Leiden, 2009), pp. 163–171.

4 For ‘Abd al-Malik’s policies, see Chase Robinson, *‘Abd Al-Malik* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 59–121; Fred McGraw Donner, “From Believers to Muslims: Confessional Self-Identity in the Early Islamic Community,” *Al-Abhath* 50–51 (2002–2003), 9–53. For the reaction of the author of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* to these events, see especially G. J. Reinink, “Following the Doctrine of the Demons: Early Christian Fear of Conversion to Islam,” in *Cultures of Conversions*, ed. Jan Bremmer, Wout Jac. van Beekum, and Arie Molendijk (Leuven, 2006), pp. 127–138. For the idea that the Islamic Caliphate would collapse as a result of the second *fitna*, see especially the work of the Nestorian monk Yuhanna bar Penkaye, who was writing perhaps a decade before Pseudo-Methodius: Sebastian Brock, “North Mesopotamia in the Late 7th Century: Book 15 of John Bar Penkaye’s ‘Ris Melle,’” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 9 (1987), 51–75.

5 Reinink, “Early Christian Reactions,” pp. 234–239.

calls the Kingdom of the Greeks and Romans (*malkūtā d-yawanāyē d-iyteyh d-rōmāyē*, ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܝܘܬܝܗ ܕܪܕܡܝܐ) – that is, the Byzantine Empire – will ultimately hold out, protected by the invincible power of the cross. The final King of the Greeks (*malkā d-yawanāyē*, ܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܘܬܝܗ), the last Byzantine Emperor, according to Pseudo-Methodius, will lead the Christians in a great war in which the Ishmaelite Arabs will be expelled from the holy land, driven into the desert, and made subject once more, so that “their slavery will be a hundred times more bitter than that which they had imposed.” The King of the Greeks will return all the displaced peoples back to their lands of origin and punish bitterly all the apostates from Christianity. Finally, after the defeat of Gog and Magog, the King of the Greeks will go to Jerusalem, surrender the crown of the Roman Empire to God, and this will be the end of all earthly rule. The Son of Perdition will arise and persecute Christians, but will then be defeated with the return of Christ and the Last Judgment, with which the apocalypse concludes.⁶

Now, very few manuscripts of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* exist in Syriac, many of them are fragmentary, and they are all fairly late. The primary witness to the Syriac text is a manuscript of the year 1586.⁷ Not surprisingly considering the apocalypse’s popularity in the Byzantine world, many more manuscripts of the Greek translation of Pseudo-Methodius survive, close to one hundred if one counts all the different recensions and epitomes, but these too are relatively late, and the vast majority date from the post-Byzantine period.⁸ Nonetheless, four eighth-century manuscripts of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* survive in Latin, one of which can be precisely dated on the

6 For the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, see *Die Syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, ed. G. J. Reinink, 2 vols (Leuven, 1993), 1:1–48 (for the Syriac text) and 2:1–78 (for a translation in German). There are several English translations of Pseudo-Methodius, though they are based on a single manuscript instead of Reinink’s critical text. These are found in Martinez, “Eastern Christian”, pp. 58–203; Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 36–51. A partial translation is included in Andrew Palmer, Sebastian Brock, and Robert Hoyland *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool, 1993), pp. 230–242.

7 The primary witness to the text is Vaticanus syriacus 58, fols. 118v–136v. For the manuscripts of Pseudo-Methodius in Syriac, see Reinink, *Die Syrische Apokalypse*, 1:xiv–xxi. For his critical edition of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, Reinink also uses extensive selections of the text quoted in Solomon of Basra’s thirteenth-century *Book of the Bee*, which gives evidence of Pseudo-Methodius’ text from earlier than the extant manuscripts.

8 For descriptions of several of these manuscripts, see Anastasios Lolos, *Die Apokalypse des Ps.-Methodios, Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie* 83 (Meisenheim, 1976), 26–44; idem, *Die dritte und vierte Redaktion des Ps.-Methodios* (Meisenheim, 1978), pp. 12–19.

basis of an Easter *computus* included in the codex to the year 727.⁹ Three of the four manuscripts have handwriting that places their composition at monasteries in Gaul. These early manuscripts have fascinated scholars, as they point to the fact that the translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into Latin in Western Europe took place only a few decades after it was originally written in Mesopotamia. It also provides an indication that the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* must have been translated into Greek even earlier: the Latin manuscripts are for the most part word-for-word translations of the Greek text as it comes down to us from the much later Greek manuscripts, with the exception of a few sections that must have been interpolated into the Greek later on.¹⁰ That the Latin translation was based on an earlier Greek

9 The manuscript which contains the date 727 is codex Bern, Burgerbibliothek, no. 611: Marc Laureys and Daniel Verhelst, "Pseudo-Methodius, *Revelationes*: Textgeschichte und kritische Edition. Ein Leuven-Groninger Forschungsprojekt," in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke et al. (Leuven, 1988), p. 114 (#4). James T. Palmer, in *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2014), p. 114, admits that despite the *computus* the paleography of the manuscript allows for it to be up to twenty years later, but that the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was surely known in Latin by 767, when Ambrosius Autpertus refers to it in his commentary on the *Book of Revelation*. The other three eighth-century manuscripts containing Peter the Monk's Latin translation of Pseudo-Methodius are: Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Latin 13348, fols. 93v-110v (dated to the mid-eighth century); Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. Lat. 671, fols. 171r-174v (dated to the middle to late eighth century); and Sankt Gallen Stiftsbibliothek 225, S. 384-439 (dated from 760-797 AD). For more on these manuscripts, see Willem J. Aerts and G. A. A. Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius: die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen* (Leuven, 1998), pp. 48-56. While in the late nineteenth century V. M. Istrin edited a Latin manuscript of Pseudo-Methodius in his *Откровение Мефодія Патарскаго* [*Revelations of Methodius of Patara*] (Moscow, 1897), pp. 75-83. Ernst Sackur prepared the first critical edition of Peter the Monk's Latin translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* the following year, based on four manuscripts: Ernst Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen: Pseudomethodius Adso und Die tiburtinische Sibylle* (Halle, 1898), pp. 59-96. A recent and more complete edition of the earliest recension can be found in Aerts and Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse*, pp. 71-199. The edition of Aerts and Kortekaas with a facing English translation can be found in Benjamin Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius: An Alexandrian World Chronicle* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012), pp. 74-139. For additional information and a useful bibliography, see Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, "Pseudo-Methodius (Latin)," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, Volume 1 (600-900)*, ed. David Thomas and Barbara Roggema (Leiden, 2009), pp. 249-252. See also Palmer, *The Apocalypse*, pp. 107-129.

10 The Greek versions of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* have been grouped into four distinct recensions. All four eighth-century manuscripts of the Latin version correspond very closely with the first recension of the Greek.

translation is confirmed by the fact that several copies of the Latin include a preface which claims to have been written by the translator, who calls himself Petrus Monachus. This “Peter the Monk” explicitly states that he translated it from Greek and indicates no knowledge that the work was originally a Syriac composition. Nor would he know of the Syriac origins of the text he was translating, since he makes clear that he believes it to be the genuine work of the fourth-century church father St. Methodius, a theologian who wrote in Greek.¹¹

Scholars have long tried to make sense of why the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was translated into Latin already in the eighth century, a time not only when knowledge of Greek in the West was rare, but when most Western European writers seemed to have little to no understanding of Islam as a new religious challenge to Christianity and did not see the Arabs, or Saracens as they called them, as anything more than one of many barbarian peoples assailing civilization from without. To the Franks, as well as to Anglo-Saxons such as Bede, these “Ishmaelites” were not understood as followers of a new monotheistic religion or members of an emerging world empire, but rather as pagan raiders who had come to harass good Christians, loot monasteries, and act as just one of the many threats to peace and tranquility.¹² Writers like the chronicler Fredegar use harsh language, calling the “Ishmaelite” Muslims “a godless race,” but this rhetoric is little different from that which they utilize to describe other non-Christian people at the fringes, such as Saxons and Frisians.¹³

The themes of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* – that the world-shattering depredations of the Ishmaelites and their inducements to apostasy were the great testing fire for Christians, as well as its discussion of the final battle of good and evil as between Romans and Ishmaelite Arabs – would seem far less relevant to the peoples of eighth-century Gaul than to the people of the Byzantine Empire. One possible explanation offered by several scholars is that the translator may have been a displaced former subject of the Byzantine

11 Aerts and Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse*, p. 66; Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, pp. 76–77: *Beati igitur Methodii episcopi et martyris dicta de Greco in Latino transferre sermone curavi*.

12 Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches Toward the Muslims* (Princeton, 1984), p. 35; John Victor Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, 2002), esp. pp. 78–104.

13 Fredegarius, *Fredegarii et aliorum chronica*, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hannover, 1888); *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar with its Continuations*, trans. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (London, 1960), p. 90, where they are called *gentem perfidam Saracinorum*. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 92, where the Frisians are in a similar fashion called *gentem dirissimam*.

Empire living in the Latin West, and that this explains both his interest in Pseudo-Methodius' prophecy and his ability to read Greek.¹⁴ However, this theory is undermined by the fact that the Latin translator, Petrus, made some glaring translation errors which suggest that Greek was not his native tongue, while his Latin follows very standard Merovingian practice for the time.¹⁵ If Petrus was not a Greek, and if he did not take the apocalypse with him from the east, it raises the question of how and why a copy of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* in Greek ended up in a western monastery so soon after its composition in Mesopotamia. Aerts and Kortekaas, citing evidence that perhaps ties the translation of the original translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* from Syriac into Greek to St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai, have suggested that perhaps there was a monastic connection between Sinai and Massilia (modern Marseille), across which the work was carried.¹⁶ Could this be the vector by which the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* entered Frankish Gaul?

One way of answering these questions and of better understanding why the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was translated and disseminated in this period is by looking at other contexts in which it was translated. As we have seen, we know something about the Greek and Latin translations, and there is some evidence that a Coptic translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was also produced in the eighth century (a fact that has gone mostly unnoticed in scholarship on Pseudo-Methodius).¹⁷ But we know virtually nothing about the contexts in which these translations were made. It seems, however, that

14 Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte*, pp. 56–59; Richard Pollard, "One Other on Another: Petrus Monachus' *Revelationes* and Islam," in *Difference and Identity in Francia and Medieval France*, ed. Meredith Cohen and Justine Firnhaber-Baker (Surrey, 2010), pp. 39–41.

15 Aerts and Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse*, pp. 25–28. See also George A. A. Kortekaas, "The Transmission of the Text of Pseudo-Methodius in cod. Paris Lat. 13348," *Revue d'histoire des textes* 18 (1988), p. 65 (footnote 7).

16 Aerts and Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse*, p. 30.

17 Though it is much harder to date precisely, an eighth-century translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into Coptic seems to have existed. It has been edited by T. Orlandi, *Papiri Copti di contenuto teologico*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (Vienna, 1974), 20 (K 7630), pp. 188–190. Orlandi states that he believed the fragment to be a homily: *ibid.*, p. 188. His realization that the fragment is a piece of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* is not mentioned in his edition of the papyrus, but is noted by Francisco Javier Martinez, "The King of Rūm and the King of Ethiopia in Medieval Apocalyptic Texts from Egypt," in *Coptic Studies: Acts of the Third International Congress of Coptic Studies Warsaw, 20–25 August 1984*, ed. Włodzimierz Godlewski (Warsaw, 1990), p. 254 (footnote 37).

another translation of the apocalypse was taking place at more or less the very same time that Petrus was translating Pseudo-Methodius into Latin, and this has the potential to shed new light on both the translation of this text, and imperial ideology in the eighth century.

Scholars have long hoped for and expected the discovery of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* in an Armenian manuscript, but unfortunately none have been found to date.¹⁸ Still, though no copy survives, we know that there must have been an Armenian translation of Pseudo-Methodius because it is quoted by medieval Armenian writers. From their quotations it is quite clear that the Armenian version was from the Greek, not the Syriac.¹⁹ One Armenian writer to discuss the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was Step'anos Orbelian, bishop of Siwnik' in Armenia, in his *History of the Province of Siwnik'* written around the year 1300. The author, Step'anos Orbelian, discusses an earlier occupant of his same episcopal throne, Step'anos of Siwnik', and adds that this earlier Step'anos had translated the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into Armenian. Step'anos Orbelian goes on to provide a full chapter in which he summarizes the apocalypse.²⁰ At times he seems to be quoting directly from

18 Michael Stone, "The Document Called 'Question,'" in *Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and Armenian Studies. Collected Papers*, ed. Michael Stone, 2 vols (Leuven, 2006), 1:240; Robert W. Thomson, "The Christian Perception of History—The Armenian Perspective," in *Redefining Christian Identity: Cultural Interaction in the Middle East since the Rise of Islam*, ed. J. J. van Ginkel, H. L. Murre-van den Berg, and Theo Maarten van Lint (Leuven, 2005), pp. 41–42. See also Aram Topchyan "The Armenian Version of the *Apocalypse of Ps.-Methodius*," in *The Armenian Apocalyptic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Kevork Bardakjian and Sergio La Porta (Leiden, 2014), pp. 362–378 (this article was still unpublished and not yet known to me when I presented this paper, but it independently draws some similar conclusions about the translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into Armenian as I have).

19 In his edition of the *Cheirograph of Adam*, which contains lengthy quotes from Pseudo-Methodius, Michael Stone discusses this issue: Michael Stone, *Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Adam and Eve* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 114–134, 144–146.

20 Step'anos Orbelian, *Patmut'iwn nahangin Sisakan*, ed. Gortsatan K. V. Shahnazarean (Paris, 1859), pp. 188–201; trans. Marie-Félicité Brosset, *Histoire de la Siounie* (St. Petersburg, 1864), pp. 89–94. The summary includes only the apocalyptic portion of the work. The first half of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, which deals with history from Adam and Eve to the rise of Rome, is excluded. Not surprisingly, Step'anos Orbelian's summary gives a greater role to Armenia, though it is uncertain if he gave his homeland this increased importance or if he is reflecting his source (i.e., the translation of Step'anos of Siwnik'): Thomson, *The Christian Perception*, p. 42. Topchyan, "The Armenian Version," pp. 366–367, notes that since Step'anos Orbelian was bishop of Siwnik', he could also properly be called

his source, as his description at points matches verbatim with fragments of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* as preserved in other Armenian texts.²¹

The life of the eighth-century translator Step'anos of Siwnik' was already somewhat legendary by the start of the fourteenth century when Step'anos Orbelian was writing. Step'anos Orbelian was likely using a lost *vita* of his predecessor and namesake, written by a certain Petros of Siwnik', from which he drew many details, including some rather fanciful stories.²² Step'anos Orbelian is by no means the only source on Step'anos of Siwnik', though he is the only one to attribute to him the translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into Armenian. The earliest mention of Step'anos of Siwnik' in Armenian histories dates back to Movses of Daskhuren (otherwise known as Movses of Kaghankatvik'), writing in the tenth century but incorporating earlier materials.²³ Subsequent historians mention Step'anos of Siwnik' as a translator, but there is little firm, reliable material from before Step'anos Orbelian's work at the beginning of the

Step'anos of Siwnik', and thus may mean that he was himself the translator of Pseudo-Methodius, not his eighth-century namesake. However, in the end Topchyan dismisses this interpretation on the grounds that the translation was clearly circulating before Step'anos Orbelian was writing. I would also emphasise, as Topchyan mentions, that it in the context of Orbelian's history (just after describing the life and translation work of the eighth-century Step'anos of Siwnik') it is clear he does not mean himself as translator. Step'anos of Siwnik' was the translator.

21 Topchyan, "The Armenian Version," pp. 373–376.

22 Step'anos Orbelian, *Patmut'iwn*, pp. 174–187; Brosset, *Histoire*, pp. 81–88. For Peter of Siwnik' as Step'anos Orbelian's source, see Stephen Gero, *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Leo III: With Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources* (Leuven, 1973), p. 144 (footnote 2).

23 Movses of Daskhuren, *Movses Kalankatuats'i: Patmut'iwn Atuanits'*, ed. V. Arak'eljan (Erevan, 1983), 3.17–18; trans. C. J. F. Dowsett, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians by Movses Dasxuranc'i*. (London, 1961), pp. 210–212. He mentions that Step'anos was sent by the emperor to Rome (by which he possibly means Constantinople, though there is a long tradition, repeated also by Step'anos Orbelean, that Step'anos of Siwnik' also traveled to Rome in Italy looking for books) to retrieve books on the faith. Then Movses proceeds to give a (rather humorously garbled) summary of the Trojan War and the foundation of Rome from texts the translation of which he attributes to Step'anos (the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*?). Interestingly, this confused narrative bears a passing resemblance to the one in the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, tying Greek, Macedonian, and Roman/Byzantine history to the history of a single people. For more information on Movses of Daskhuren as a source, see James Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 103–128.

fourteenth century.²⁴ Still, there are some important things we know about the Armenian bishop who is credited as the translator of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into Armenian. We do know that he was bishop of the province of Siwnik', probably around the year 728, and, more significantly, that before this he had spent some time in Constantinople.²⁵

During his time in Constantinople, Step'anos of Siwnik' embarked on a number of translations, one of a group of several Armenian scholars and translators active in the Byzantine capital.²⁶ He worked with another Armenian, Davit' "Hiwpatos" – from *hypatos* (ὑπάτος), "consul," by this point an honorary court title – a *coenarius* (κηνάριος) of the Royal Table," whose titles suggest he was highly placed in the imperial government.²⁷ Together they translated Gregory of Nyssa, Nemesius of Emessa, Cyril of Alexandria, and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite into Armenian.²⁸

24 For lists of Armenian texts that mention Step'anos of Siwnik', see Gero, *Iconoclasm*, p. 143 (footnote 1); Robert Thomson, *The Armenian Version of the Works Attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite*, 2 vols (Leuven, 1987), 1:xii–xiii.

25 For a general overview of the life of Step'anos of Siwnik', see Michael Findikyan, "Bishop Step'annos Siwnec'i: A Source for the Study of Medieval Armenian Liturgy," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 44 (1995), pp. 174–175. See also *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit: Erste Abteilung*, eds Ralph-Johannes Lilie, Claudia Ludwig, Thomas Pratsch, et al., vol. 1 (Berlin, 1999), p. 230 (#6989).

26 Abraham Terian discusses Step'anos as the last major figure in the so-called Hellenizing School of Armenian scholars, which had already been active in Constantinople for at least a century, in his study "The Hellenizing School: Its Time, Place, and Scope of Activities Reconsidered," in *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period*, ed. Nina Garsoïan, Thomas Mathews, and Robert Thomson (Washington, D.C., 1982), pp. 175–186.

27 *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit: Erste Abteilung*, vol. 4 (Berlin, 2001), p. 402 (#1250). It should be noted that Armenians, like Davit, in general had strong influence in the imperial government in this period (a development which began under the reign of Justinian I in the sixth century and had picked up pace since), and, moreover, Emperor Philippikos (r. 711–713), whose original name was Bardanes/Vardan, was of Armenian origin, and so it is likely that his rule and coinciding network of patronage opened the corridors of power to friends and relations who were also ethnically Armenian.

28 Thomson, *The Armenian Version*, pp. vii–ix. A short description of Step'anos of Siwnik' in the thirteenth-century Armenian *Synaxarium of Ter Israel*, also explicitly mentions that Step'anos had translated Dionysius the Areopagite and Gregory of Nyssa. See *Le Synaxaire Arménien de Ter Israël*, ed. and trans. G. Bayan, in *Patrologia Orientalis* 21 (Paris, 1907), p. 767. Translations of the *Hexaemeron* of George of Pisidia, the *Phaenomena* of Aratus, and the *Ecclesiastical History* of Socrates Scholasticus may also be Step'anos' work, or the work of a contemporary collaborator of the Hellenizing School: Terian, "Hellenizing School," pp. 176–177.

Identical colophons in at least five thirteenth-century manuscripts of the Armenian translation of Pseudo-Dionysius indicate that it was undertaken by Step‘anos and Davit from manuscripts in Constantinople in the year 6220 of the creation of the world according to the Greek numbering, in the 14th indiction, the second year of the reign of Emperor Philippikos. Colophons from the manuscripts of two other works translated by the pair place their translation activities in the reigns of Anastasios II and Leon III, and presumably these translations were also undertaken in the Byzantine capital.²⁹

TABLE 16.1 *Dates and locations of works translated by Step‘anos of Siwnik‘ and Davit‘ “Hiwpatos”, according to the colophons of surviving manuscripts.^a*

Work	Location	Year (“Greek numbering”)	Indiction	Regnal Year
Pseudo-Dionysius	Constantinople	6220 (711–712 AD)	14	Second year of Philip(pikos)
<i>Scholia</i> of Cyril of Alexandria	–	6224 (715–716 AD)	14	Second year of Astas (Anastasios II)
Various works by Gregory of Nyssa	–	6227 (718–719 AD)	14	First year of Leo (III)

^a Based on Thomson, *The Armenian Version*, pp. ix–xiii. The manuscripts containing the colophons with information on the place and time of Step‘anos’ translation of Pseudo-Dionysius are codices Matanadaran 49, 51, 166, 167, and 1500. The colophon in Matanadaran 51 also includes the information on the translation of Gregory of Nyssa. The colophon with information on the translation of the *Scholia* of Cyril of Alexandria is in codex Bodleian Arm. 69, fol. 172: Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare, *Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1918), p. 160.

These dates in these colophons are problematic. Some of the years listed do not match up with the regnal years of the emperor listed, and most of the years are placed in the wrong indiction (tax year).³⁰ Still, while it is not surprising that

29 Thomson, *The Armenian Version*, pp. ix–xiii.
30 Thomson, *The Armenian Version*, p. xiii: The colophon for the copies of Pseudo-Dionysius date it to the Byzantine year 6220 (September 1, 711–August 31, 712 AD), which it correctly

chronological errors would have slipped into the colophons in the five centuries of copying between the production of the original autographs and the earliest surviving manuscripts, there is strong reason to believe that the translation was actually done in Constantinople in the early eighth century. While the biographical details given by Step'anos Orbelian and other Armenian sources are by no means indisputable, they do all agree that Step'anos of Siwnik' travelled to Constantinople. Further weight is given to Constantinople as the location of Step'anos' translation work by the fact that his Armenian text of Pseudo-Dionysius, as Robert Thomson has demonstrated, agrees in readings unique to the earliest surviving Greek manuscript, produced in Constantinople in the ninth century.³¹ Between this and the general timeframe given by the colophons, as Thomson states, it seems "the cumulative tradition is fairly strong" that Step'anos of Siwnik' was in Constantinople producing translations around the reigns of Philippikos (r. 711–713), Anastasios II (r. 713–715), Theodosios III (r. 715–717), and the start of the reign of Leon III (r. 717–741). Scholarly consensus holds he was probably in the city from c. 712–728.³² Step'anos and Davit', if the colophons are correct, would have been conducting their translation project as the Arab armies approached Constantinople, and possibly even during the momentous siege that took place 717–718 AD.³³

Now, it is possible that the tradition that Step'anos of Siwnik' translated the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into Armenian is false, and that the translation was simply attributed to him in light of the fact that he was a well-known translator of Greek texts. Yet other literary works which are still extant, also first attributed by Step'anos Orbelian to Step'anos of Siwnik', do seem to date genuinely to the eighth century.³⁴ Moreover, it appears that the Armenian translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was composed around the same time as the Latin translation—that is, in the early eighth century—since none of the descriptions and fragments of the work in Armenian contain the long depiction of an Ishmaelite siege of Constantinople that appears in nearly all surviving manuscripts of the Greek translation, but is missing from the Latin,

places in the second year of Philippikos (Bardanes) (r. 711–713 AD), but this was not the 14th indiction as it says. The colophon of Cyril correctly puts year 6224 (715–716 AD) in the 14th indiction, but this was not the second year of Anastasios, who began his reign in 713, nor is it, as the colophon states, year 221 of the Armenian calendar (which is actually the year 772 AD!). The colophon in the Gregory/Nemesius manuscript is incorrect in putting the year 6227 (719 AD) in both the 14th indiction and as the first year of Leon III, who began his reign in 717 AD.

31 Thomson, *The Armenian Version*, p. xiii.

32 Terian, "Hellenizing School," p. 182.

33 Ibid.

34 Findikyan, "Bishop Step'annos Siwnec'i," p. 176 (footnote 21).

and which therefore must have been interpolated into the Greek later, likely in the late eighth century.³⁵ Though it is possible that the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was translated into Armenian by someone else and later attributed to Step'anos of Siwnik' on account of his reputation as a famous translator, it is tempting to believe that Step'anos produced the translation since he was operating at just the right time.³⁶ If it is true, though, it would mean that there existed in Constantinople a manuscript of Pseudo-Methodius in Greek from which Step'anos could translate.

The existence of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* in Constantinople in the early eighth century would be revealing. This would mean that the text

35 *The Greek Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, 13.7–10, Aerts and Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse*, pp. 170–172; Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, pp. 55–57. For a study of this interpolation, see Wolfram Brandes, “Die Belagerung Konstantinopels 717/718 als apokalyptisches Ereignis: Zu einer Interpolation im griechischen Text der Pseudo-Methodios-Apokalypse,” in *Byzantina Mediterranea: Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Johannes Koder and Klaus Belke (Vienna, 2007), 65–91. For the absence of the interpolation in the all surviving Armenian versions, see Topchyan, “The Armenian Version,” p. 368. The date of the interpolation is controversial. A date of 718 or shortly afterward (in direct response to the second Arab siege of Constantinople) is favored by Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, 296–297; and András Kraft, “*The Last Emperor topos in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*” (MA thesis, Central European University, 2011), pp. 45–47. However, Brandes, “Die Belagerung Konstantinopels,” p. 83; Willem J. Aerts, “Zu einer neuen Ausgabe der ‘Revelationes’ des Pseudo-Methodius (syrisch-griechisch-lateinisch),” in *XXIV. Deutscher Orientalistentag*, ed. Werner Diem and Aboldjavad Falaturi (Stuttgart, 1990), p. 130, date it later (to possibly the late eighth or early ninth century) on the basis of the mention of the city of Malagina (Μαλαγινά), the earliest other mention of which is during the reign of Empress Eirene (r. 797–802).

36 According to Topchyan, “The Armenian Version,” p. 368, the Armenian version of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* as it is preserved in Orbelian's text suggests an eighth-century date for the translation. Nonetheless, he believes the Armenian translation may have been falsely attributed to Step'anos of Siwnik' since the language is simple classical Armenian, while Step'anos of Siwnik' and his fellow translators of the Hellenizing School used complex and highly artificial Armenian that imitated Greek grammar and lexical usage. However, there are difficulties with Topchyan's interpretation: the Hellenizing School was extremely influential in this period, and even if the translator of Pseudo-Methodius was not Step'anos it is difficult to imagine a translator not being influenced by the school's methodology. As Topchyan even admits, *ibid.*, p. 367 (note 30) some participle use does mirror that of Greek, and Topchyan fails to take into account the fact that the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was written in a different register than many of the other works translated by the Hellenizing School, with fairly simple sentence structure and vocabulary. For these reasons, I find little reason to doubt the attribution of Step'anos of Siwnik' as translator.

was not just circulating in the periphery as Aerts and Kortekaas' assessment implies, and it suggests that there was a similar interest at the Byzantine capital in the fate of Christians ruled by the new Islamic Arab power as among Christians in Mesopotamia living under Muslim rule. It suggests that the Arab invasions were not seen just as another barbarian invasion, but as something more threatening, both a military and a religious challenge which needed to be countered ideologically. This is why the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* would have been so valuable: it claims to have been written by a fourth-century Christian church father. If a patristic writer, had centuries earlier foreseen the coming of the Islamic Arabs through a vision from God, then it follows that whatever depredations they committed were part of the Christian God's plan for humanity; and if that same writer had foreseen the destruction of the Islamic Arabs then their annihilation at the hands of the last Emperor of the Christian Romans must have been just as assured as their sudden rise from out of the desert.

Finally, for the Byzantines, who already by this time had come to see themselves as the New Israel, the Chosen People of God, the apocalypse makes clear that God had not withdrawn his favour from them. The final age of the world would not see the destruction of the Roman state, but its resurgence. This was a crucial point. Repeated defeats at the hands of the Arabs, the loss of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, as well as two major sieges of Constantinople, meant that old certainties of Christian universalism and God's ultimate support for the Christian Empire of the Romans had gone out the window. We see these anxieties come to the fore in contemporary Byzantine thinking in a number of ways, already in the canons of the Quinisext Council – held in the years 691–692, about the same time as the original composition of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* – and most notably a generation later in the iconoclast movement that emerged under Leon III in the immediate aftermath of the second Arab siege of Constantinople.³⁷ The iconoclasts may have sought to root out a perceived sin for which God was punishing his Christian people. The *Apocalypse*

37 For the canons of the Quinisext Council, see *Concilium Constantinopolitanum a. 691/2 in Trullo habitum (Concilium Quinisextum)*, ed. Heinz Ohme (Berlin, 2013). For a discussion of the council as an attempt to deal with Byzantine anxieties over defeat and invasion, see Frank Trombley, "The Council in Trullo (691–692): A Study in the Canons Relating to Paganism, Heresy, and the Invasions," *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 9 (1978), 1–18. The standard work on Iconoclasm is now Leslie Brubaker and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680–850: A History* (Cambridge, 2011). See also idem, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (c. 680–850): The Sources* (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 272–275.

of *Pseudo-Methodius* was likely eagerly seized upon in the Byzantine Empire for similar reasons. It promised that the Ishmaelite Arabs were but a temporary scourge sent by God to punish his chosen people. The apocalypse says directly:

For God says to Israel through Moses, ‘Not because the Lord God loves you does he bring you into the Land of Promise to inherit it, but because of the sins of those who dwell in it.’ Just so with the sons of Ishmael. Not because the Lord God loves them does he give them power to conquer the land of the Christians, but because of the sin and the lawlessness which have been brought into being by them.³⁸

Pseudo-Methodius goes on to blame sexual immorality, one of his favourite themes, for God’s desire to punish Christians with the scourge of the Sons of Ishmael.

The *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, with its supposed prediction of the chaotic rise and impending collapse of Arab power, would have fit equally well within the Armenian zeitgeist of the early eighth century. Armenia was very much caught in the middle of the struggle between the Byzantines and the Arabs, and from the second half of the seventh century, it came increasingly under Arab political influence. In 702, just shortly before Step‘anos of Siwnik‘ would have travelled to Constantinople, an Armenian rebellion against the authority of the Caliphate took place under the leadership of the *nakharar* Smbat Bagratuni and received Byzantine military support. The rebellion was brutally crushed, the Byzantine troops repulsed, and, in retribution, the Arabs locked rebellious Armenian princes and their followers in churches and burned them alive. Eight hundred men in Nakhchawan and four hundred in Khram are said to have suffered such a fate.³⁹ This event, which corresponds so closely with the description of the atrocities that the Ishmaelites are predicted

38 See *The Greek Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, 11.5, pp. 138–140 in the edition of Aerts and Kortekaas and pp. 38–39 in the work of Garstad: “λέγει γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τῷ Ἰσραὴλ διὰ Μωϋσέως· “οὐχ ὅτι ἀγαπᾷ ὑμᾶς Κύριος ὁ θεὸς εἰσάγει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τοῦ κληρονομήσαι αὐτήν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας τῶν κατοικούντων ἐν αὐτῇ.” Οὕτω καὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσμαὴλ· οὐχ ὅτι ἀγαπᾷ αὐτοὺς Κύριος ὁ θεὸς δίδωσιν αὐτοῖς δυναστείαν κρατῆσαι τῆς γῆς τῶν χριστιανῶν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ὑπ’ αὐτῶν γινομένην.”

39 Movses of Daskhuren, *Patmut‘iwn Atuanits‘*, 3.16. See also Dowsett, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians*, pp. 207–208. This event is also recorded in the Byzantine chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: *Theophanis Chronographia*, ed. Carl de Boor, 2 vols [Leipzig, 1883 (repr. Hildesheim, 1963)], 1:372; *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813*, trans. Cyril Mango and Roger Scott (Oxford, 1997), pp. 519–520.

to commit in the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, could easily have been close to the mind of the Armenian translator.⁴⁰ He may have believed the apocalypse was a useful and authoritative guide to help his fellow Armenians understand the Arabs and how his people should respond to their growing, and often dangerous, power. This impulse to look for hope in resurgent Byzantine imperial power through the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was not unique, but, as we have seen, was shared by others in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Frankish Gaul.

Still, with the translations from the Greek appearing so close in time to one another, and considering the place of Constantinople in the Armenian translation, it is tempting to see even more at work. Suliman Bashear suggested that the eighth century saw a proliferation of apocalyptic works among Muslims that promised victory in the war against the Byzantines, a sort of apocalyptic military propaganda, assuring final victory and a conquest of Constantinople just before the Day of Judgment.⁴¹ In the dissemination of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, we likely find the same phenomenon taking place on the Byzantine side. When this text was translated in places like Gaul, Egypt, and Armenia, it brought with it a clear ideological message at a time when the Byzantine Empire had few other resources to back up its imperial authority. Just as it could have assured Byzantines in the capital that Islam and the Arab invasions were but temporary parts of God's ultimate plan, it would have reminded peoples in the contested border lands that the Byzantine cause would ultimately prevail. Furthermore, as Pseudo-Methodius promised, those who abandoned Christianity for the rewards offered by the Ishmaelites would suffer the worst when the King of the Greeks, or the *basileus tōn Rhōmaiōn* (βασιλεύς τῶν Ῥωμαίων), as the Greek translation calls him, vented his wrath upon the enemies of God.

That is not to say the translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was necessarily directed by the government in Constantinople, despite the high position of Step'anos' colleague Davit'. It may simply have been spread by independent monks, clergy, and laity, who were frightened and confused as their teleological view of history, their concept that history was moving ever

40 Interestingly, it is also immediately after his chapter on this event that Movses of Daskhuren describes the journey of Step'anos of Siwnik' to the land of the Romans: Movses of Daskhuren, *Patmut'iwn Ałuanits'*, 3.17–18; Dowsett, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians*, pp. 210–212.

41 Suliman Bashear, "Apocalyptic and Other Materials on Early Muslim-Byzantine Wars: A Review of Arabic Sources," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Third Series, 1/2 (1991), 173–207.

closer to the spread of Christianity to all people throughout the world, was shattered by a militant and expansionist Islam. Indeed, there is no evidence that the above-mentioned Islamic apocalyptic treatises promising victory over the Byzantines were centrally disseminated either. Rather, it seems that interest in such political-eschatological works came from assorted partisans of either side of the momentous conflict seeking vindication in apocalyptic visions of the future.

There are several conclusions provided by this understanding of a possible early eighth-century translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*. It suggests widespread interest throughout the Christian Mediterranean world in the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, even at this early date. In addition, considering the place of Constantinople in the process of the Armenian translation, it seems more emphasis should be given to the imperial capital as the likely central point in the dissemination of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* in the eighth century. Theories like those of Kmosko and Aerts and Kortekaas of a connection between Sinai or Syria and Frankish Gaul are rendered unnecessary. Constantinople was the axis point of these worlds.

Moreover, by emphasizing a greater role for Constantinople, these findings suggest a cultural dynamism and connection between the Byzantine centre and its peripheries that runs counter to the traditional narrative of an exhausted and isolated Byzantium in the eighth century. While there is no evidence that any emperor or his government directed the dissemination of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, people in the capital connected to the government, like Davit' "Hiwpatos," may have actively sought to spread the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* to new lands. This, combined with the largely unnoticed evidence of a contemporary Coptic translation, would suggest that in a period of improvisation in dealing with the existential threat of expansionist Islam, loyal Byzantines fought back with tools beyond simple weapons of war. They spread the message far and wide – to places such as Gaul, Egypt, and Armenia – that the empire's power was not broken, its final victory was long-ago prophesied, and the provinces and outlying kingdoms should not turn away from Byzantine influence and authority; for with the help of God the Chosen People of Constantinople and their emperor were destined to overthrow the enemies of the faith, and once more rule over all surviving kingdoms before the end of time.

Comprendre les « Sarrasins » à Byzance dans la première moitié du IX^e siècle

Jakub Sypiański

Introduction*

Cet article s'emploie à décrire les interactions sociales entre les Byzantins et les musulmans comme un processus qui s'est développé progressivement dans le temps et qui n'était pas une série immuable d'épisodes similaires (des ambassades spectaculaires, de féroces polémiques interreligieuses...) comme le présentent les historiens aussi bien médiévaux que modernes. Je vais poser deux questions simples : d'une part, comment les connaissances des « Sarrasins » et de leur religion sont-elles entrées à Constantinople et sont-elles devenues l'objet d'intérêt dans la littérature byzantine ? Et d'autre part, comment ce processus était-il intégré à la vie politique et sociale des Byzantins ?

Je vais commencer en examinant une question encore plus basique : qui sont les Byzantins qui, à cette époque, ont eu des contacts avec les musulmans ? Je pars du principe que leurs préoccupations et intérêts dans ces rapports ont influencé la façon dont les Byzantins ont formulé leur image des Arabes et de l'islam et y ont réagi.

J'ai distingué trois groupes sociaux en contact avec les musulmans à cette époque : (1) les melkites, (2) les soldats et (3) les élites de Constantinople. Ces milieux ont produit (ou influencé) des réponses littéraires différentes, selon leurs façons de percevoir l'islam. Je vais les présenter séparément et dans un ordre approximativement chronologique.

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Le cercle palestino-stoudite et l'arrivée de la polémique antimusulmane des melkites à Constantinople

Le premier segment de la société byzantine ou plutôt post-byzantine qui se heurta à l'islam était constitué par les chrétiens passés sous le pouvoir califal suite aux conquêtes arabes. Certains, ceux qui appartenaient à l'Église chalcédonienne et connus comme melkites, maintinrent pendant un certain temps des liens ecclésiastiques avec Constantinople et l'usage de la langue grecque dans leurs écrits. Les principaux sentiments et préoccupations de ces chrétiens étaient: (1) le choc de conquêtes arabes qui a stimulé l'impression de vivre les temps apocalyptiques, (2) les conséquences pratiques de vivre avec les musulmans et sous leur autorité (la licéité des mariages avec les musulmans, la possibilité de porter ses affaires judiciaires devant les courts musulmans par les chrétiens etc.) et (3) le taux croissant de conversions à l'islam, qui a donné naissance à la composition des traités polémiques anti-islamiques et apologetiques chrétiens. La première de ces préoccupations (le sentiment apocalyptique) est apparue aussi à Byzance¹, mais sans provoquer un intérêt pour la religion des « Sarrasins », réduits ici au rôle du fléau divin. La deuxième (les modalités de la coexistence avec les musulmans) n'était pas directement pertinente au sein de l'Empire. La troisième (l'engagement apologetique) a façonné la phase initiale de l'intérêt des constantinopolitains à l'égard de la religion musulmane.

Au cours du VIII^e siècle, la littérature apologetique et polémique anti-islamique s'est beaucoup développée, donc à l'époque qui nous intéresse, le IX^e siècle, la population *dhimmi* était déjà particulièrement expérimentée dans ce domaine². Au même moment les auteurs au sein de l'Empire semblent ne pas s'intéresser à l'islam. Nous ne connaissons aucun traité polémique qui soit consacré à cette religion à Constantinople et l'intérêt pour les musulmans semble avoir ici uniquement une dimension politique. Aux VII^e et VIII^e siècles les élites de l'Empire byzantin n'ont pas laissé de témoignage qui exprimerait leur attention ethnographique ou théologique à l'identité ou à la religion des conquérants arabes auxquels ils étaient confrontés³.

1 Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, 2007), pp. 294–307; comparer l'article de Christopher Bonura dans ce volume, pp. 261–276.

2 Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, pp. 454–518; Sidney Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton, 2010), pp. 23–74.

3 La seule instance d'un vague intérêt pour les convictions religieuses des « Sarrasins » se trouve dans une lettre du patriarche Germanos consacrée à la défense du culte des images: *Πρὸς Θωμᾶν ἐπίσκοπον Κλαυδιουπόλεως*, dans *Patrologia Graeca* 98, éd. Jean-Paul Migne (Paris,

Le choc des échecs militaires et des grandes pertes territoriales a laissé une forte empreinte dans les esprits byzantins, mais il ne doit pas, je crois, être automatiquement considéré comme synonyme d'intérêt religieux ou ethnographique à l'égard des « Sarrasins ». Cette situation de désintérêt change brusquement au début du IX^e siècle. À ce moment apparaissent à Constantinople les premiers textes bien informés à propos des événements internes au califat et les premiers traités écrits contre la religion musulmane.

Il est difficile de ne pas lier ce phénomène avec les contacts étroits entre Constantinople et les chrétiens palestiniens à cette époque. La seconde moitié du VIII^e siècle et le début du IX^e ont vu l'arrivée de plusieurs groupes des chrétiens orthodoxes palestiniens à Byzance⁴. Parmi les moines se trouvait l'historien Georges le Syncelle (mort après 810)⁵ qui sur son lit de mort confia la tâche de finir son œuvre historique à son disciple et ami, un moine aristocrate byzantin, Théophane le Confesseur (760–817/818). Un autre moine-aristocrate, Théodore Stoudite (759–826), avait pour disciple Michel le Syncelle (c. 761–846)⁶, un moine palestinien. Nous avons donc ici affaire à quatre personnages importants, deux moines palestiniens et deux moines issus de l'aristocratie byzantine et liés avec la congrégation monastique stoudite. Leur collaboration anti-iconoclaste est bien connue, mais je voudrais ici porter l'attention sur un autre champ de leur activité et signaler l'importance de ces milieux monastiques dans l'enrichissement de la compréhension de l'islam à Constantinople et dans l'identification de cette religion comme un danger pour les chrétiens. On l'appréhende dans une série de traités consacrés à la religion qui émanent de ces milieux.

De la *Chronographie*, l'ouvrage de George le Syncelle rédigé et continué par Théophane, émane un intérêt marqué pour le monachisme palestinien – une préoccupation qui provoque naturellement une représentation vive et extrêmement négative des musulmans. Théophane était très préoccupé par le sort de la communauté chrétienne, et particulièrement monastique, sous

1863), cols 168 A–D. Il dénigre les Sarrasins en disant qu'ils vénèrent une pierre dans le désert, mais étant donné que ce motif apparaissait déjà en antiquité, cela peut être plutôt une expression d'antiquarianisme ethnographique. Voir John Meyendorff, « Byzantine Views of Islam », *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964), 113–132 et la note 24 ; Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, pp. 103–107.

4 Marie France Auzépy, « Le rôle des émigrés orientaux à Constantinople et dans l'Empire (634–843) : acquis et perspectives, » *Al-Qanṭara* 33/2 (2012), 475–503 ; Jean Gouillard, « Un 'quartier' d'émigrés palestiniens à Constantinople au IX^e siècle ? », *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes* 7 (1969), 73–76.

5 Warren T. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York, 2013), pp. 38–77.

6 Siméon Vailhe, « Saint Michel le syncelle et les deux frères Graptoi, saint Théodore et saint Théophane », *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 9 (1901), pp. 313–332 et 610–642.

domination musulmane et il était très sensible aux souffrances qui leur étaient infligées par les musulmans. Il se félicite qu'à Constantinople l'empereur Michel I^{er} Rangabes (r. 811–813) et le patriarche Nicéphore I^{er} aient « accueilli chaleureusement » les réfugiés de Palestine et leur aient « donné un monastère remarquable »⁷. Je crois que cette reconnaissance et la flatterie à l'adresse de l'empereur provenaient du sein de cette communauté de moines expatriés, avec laquelle Théophane fut lié par son maître Georges.

Théophane a consacré plusieurs pages à dénigrer les Arabes, qu'il présente comme lâches (p. 409) et sournois (pp. 409, 366 et 377). L'islam pour lui est une doctrine maligne, illégitime et maléfique (p. 334). Il réitère les arguments avancés auparavant par les polémistes chrétiens proche-orientaux du VIII^e siècle, par exemple l'anecdote selon laquelle Mahomet aurait été amené à l'hérésie par l'épilepsie et par des enseignements erronés acquis lors des rencontres avec des juifs et des chrétiens hérétiques. Théophane dans sa polémique met sur le même plan les musulmans et les iconoclastes (qui selon lui se sont inspirés directement de l'islam), tous les deux étant les ennemis de l'orthodoxie (p. 406). Sa chronique constitue la plus ancienne source de l'opinion selon laquelle l'édit iconoclaste de Léon III aurait été inspiré par l'édit similaire du calife Yazid II⁸. Le texte montre aussi une préoccupation à l'égard des conversions : l'auteur rend hommage aux martyrs qui ont perdu leur vie en refusant d'accepter l'islam et blâme ceux qui ont choisi la conversion⁹.

Théodore Stoudite a aussi consacré un traité contre l'islam qui se trouve dans un codex d'Athos¹⁰. C'est une polémique contre plusieurs hérésies, qui décrit aussi celle des Sarrasins. Théodore présente la généalogie des Arabes, leur idolâtrie et la mission de Mahomet, les coutumes matrimoniales, la circoncision et fait une apologie de la religion chrétienne, surtout de Jésus et de la Trinité, en tirant les informations sur l'islam de Jean Damascène. Quant à Michel le Syncelle¹¹, les chercheurs lui attribuent trois ouvrages qui portent

7 Théophane, *Chronographie*, éd. Carl de Boor [Leipzig, 1883 (réimpr. Hildesheim, 1963)], p. 499.

8 Théophane, *Chronographie*, p. 410 ; Patricia Crone, « Islam, Judeo-Christianity and Byzantine iconoclasm », *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 2 (1980), pp. 69–70.

9 Théophane, *Chronographie*, pp. 402 et 414.

10 Athos, Lavra Ω 44 (18). Le manuscrit attribue ce traité polémique en trimètres iambiques à Théodore Stoudite, ce qui est appuyé par la *Vie de Théodore Stoudite* (BHG 1754), dans *Patrologia Graeca* 99, col. 264C selon laquelle Théodore a composé un ouvrage dans lequel il « a énuméré toutes les hérésies et les a rendus anathèmes, en (...) vers trimètres purs ». Voir aussi Antonio Rigo, « La sezione sui musulmani dell'opera di Teodoro Studita contro le eresie », *Revue des études byzantines* 56 (1998), pp. 213–230.

11 Athina Kolia-Dermizaki, « Michael the Syncellos », dans *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History Volume 1 (600–900)*, éd. David Thomas, Barbara Roggema, et Juan

sur l'islam : (1) la traduction de l'arabe au grec d'une lettre exposant la doctrine chalcédonienne ; (2) une rédaction de la Passion des quarante-deux martyres d'Amorion ; (3) une réfutation de l'islam incluse dans la chronique de Georges le Moine¹².

En conséquence, il semble qu'il existait dans la capitale un cercle intellectuel, composé de moines palestiniens et de stoudites constantinopolitains.

La réflexion sur la composition de ce « cercle » devrait être encore approfondie – on devrait prendre en compte les éventuels antagonismes et divergences à l'intérieur de ce groupe : tandis que Georges et Théophane étaient proches au patriarche Taraise (m. 806), Théodore et Michel s'opposaient à lui. Néanmoins, malgré les distances entre eux, il me semble plausible que ce groupe de moines partageait un agenda politique : les écrits qui en émanent servaient à le promouvoir. Les exhortations à l'adresse de l'empereur auraient pu être liées à la volonté de rétablir les liens étroits entre les Palestiniens et le pouvoir impérial à Constantinople qui furent brisés par l'adoption de l'iconoclasme. Cette communauté aurait pu vouloir pousser l'empereur à mener une politique plus active contre les musulmans – soit par la force des armes, soit par la protection diplomatique des chrétiens en terre de l'islam (comme celle dont jouissait la communauté de Palestine de la part de Charlemagne)¹³. Cette production polémique du cercle palestino-stoudite a été entravée par la restauration de l'iconoclasme en 815 par Léon V (r. 813–820) et la persécution des membres de ce cercle. Pourtant, comme nous allons le voir, cela ne signifiait pas une diminution d'intérêt à Constantinople pour les Arabes.

Les ambitions de Théophile et la dimension culturelle de la rivalité diplomatique

Si on met à part ce cercle palestino-stoudite et certains renégats passés d'un côté à l'autre¹⁴, les élites constantinopolitaines avaient un rapport limité avec les musulmans. La seule chaîne directe de ses contacts était la diplomatie : la

Pedro Monferrer Salla (Leyde, 2009), 1:627–632. Ci-après, je vais me référer à cette série comme « *ChMR* ».

¹² Kolia-Dermitzaki, « Michael the Syncellos, » p. 632 ; Stephanos Efthymiadis, « George the Monk, » *ChMR* 1, pp. 729–733.

¹³ Arveh Graboïs, « Charlemagne, Rome and Jerusalem, » *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 59 (1981), 792–809 ; Michael McCormick, *Charlemagne's Survey of the Holy Land* (Washington D.C., 2011).

¹⁴ Mohamed Tahar Mansouri, « Présence byzantine en terre d'Islam (VII^e–XI^e siècle) : sources d'informations et moyens de propagande, » dans *Orient et Occident (IX^e–XV^e siècles). Histoire et Archéologie* (Amiens, 2000), pp. 187–199.

correspondance diplomatique et les échanges des ambassadeurs. Ces deux formes ne se limitent pas aux pourparlers sur des questions pratiques, mais ils sont souvent présentés comme un duel idéologique (dans les sources arabes dès le début, dans celles byzantines dès le IX^e siècle). Ce n'était pas une propriété unique des relations arabo-byzantines. Un de rôles de la diplomatie méditerranéenne de l'Antiquité tardive et du haut Moyen Âge était de démontrer la suprématie culturelle – c'était par exemple la fonction des cadeaux diplomatiques, dont les échanges stimulaient la rivalité culturelle entre les souverains méditerranéens¹⁵.

La lettre diplomatique était le principal moyen de contact entre Constantinople et les souverains musulmans, comme dans toutes les relations diplomatiques à l'époque. La particularité de la présentation de cette lettre dans les sources arabes était la mise en relief de la question religieuse. Selon la tradition, Mahomet déjà avait envoyé des épîtres à l'empereur Héraclius et aux autres souverains du Proche-Orient, en les exhortant à embrasser l'islam¹⁶. Cette coutume subsista et toute lettre postérieure envoyée par le calife à l'empereur byzantin inclut une telle sollicitation¹⁷, comme par exemple dans le cas de la lettre d'Harun ar-Rachid (r. 786–809)¹⁸ à Constantin VI (r. 780–797). Aussi en parlant des personnages des ambassadeurs, les sources arabes prétendent que les envoyés musulmans s'engageaient dans des polémiques religieuses à Constantinople et qu'à l'arrivée des ambassadeurs byzantins les califes mettaient en scène ce type de disputes religieux à la cour, uniquement pour leur

15 Anthony Cutler, « Les échanges de dons entre Byzance et l'Islam (IX^e–XI^e siècles), » *Journal des savants* 1 (1996), 51–66 ; idem, « Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies, » *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001), 247–278 ; idem, « Significant Gifts: Patterns of Exchange in Late Antique, Byzantine, and Early Islamic Diplomacy, » *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38 (2008), 79–101 ; Leslie Brubaker, « The Elephant and the Ark: Cultural and Material Interchange across the Mediterranean in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries », *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004), 175–195.

16 Nadia Maria El-Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), p. 44 ; Griffith, *Church*, pp. 86–88.

17 Benjamin De Lee, « Theological Diplomacy in the Middle Byzantine Period – Propaganda War between Constantinople and Caliphate or Interfaith Dialogue, » dans *Byzantium and the Arab World: Encounter of Civilizations*, éd. Apostolos Kralides et Andreas Gkoutzioukostas (Thessalonique, 2013), pp. 269–280.

18 Ibn al-Layth, *Lettre Du Calife Hārūn Ar-Rašīd à L'empereur Constantin VI*, éd. et trad. Hadi Eid (Paris, 1992) ; Barbara Roggema, « Ibn Al-Layth, » *ChMR* 1, pp. 347–353.

montrer la supériorité du pouvoir musulman et de la religion musulmane¹⁹. Les récits similaires du côté byzantin sont bien moins nombreux et apparaissent au IX^e siècle.

Les échanges d'ambassadeurs, de lettres et des cadeaux n'avaient pas seulement le rôle dans la diplomatie extérieure, mais aussi dans la politique intérieure. Ils étaient pour le souverain un moyen précieux de démontrer aux membres de son élite et peut-être à tous ses sujets, qu'il était à la pointe du combat idéologique et doctrinal contre l'ennemi, et qu'il pouvait être considéré comme un souverain de classe mondiale²⁰. Ainsi, bien qu'on puisse considérer la « lettre du calife au roi des Rūm » comme un *topos* populaire dans l'historiographie musulmane, il est aussi possible que la correspondance des califes avec les empereurs inclue réellement ces exhortations religieuses, étant donné que les califes voulaient imiter les actions du Prophète (ou se présenter ainsi). On peut observer l'utilisation similaire de relations extérieures dans les actions de l'empereur Théophile.

Théophile (r. 829–842) fut un jeune dirigeant ambitieux et un partisan convaincu de l'iconoclasme. Il cherchait à renforcer son régime et à soutenir sa politique religieuse par toute une série de mesures, comme un vaste programme architectural et des campagnes militaires contre le califat abbasside, le principal adversaire de l'Empire. Ses succès guerriers contre al-Mamoun au début de son règne ne furent pas spectaculaires, mais puisqu'ils se produisirent après deux décennies de défaites et de guerre civile sous les empereurs iconophiles, ils ont permis à Théophile de justifier de sa politique religieuse par la « faveur divine » et de s'associer à la mémoire du victorieux empereur iconoclaste Constantin V (r. 741–775).

Dans les sources byzantines, notamment les sources plus tardives, on trouve une série d'épisodes curieux décrivant un caractère particulier de ses relations avec les musulmans et son engagement exceptionnel dans les activités intellectuelles à Constantinople. J'en décris quatre que je vais ensuite corréler avec les épisodes et phénomènes contenus dans les sources arabo-musulmanes.

19 Mansouri, « Présence byzantine », p. 244 et 252 ; Nike C. Koutrakou, « Highlights in Arab-Byzantine Cultural Relations (IXth–XIth Centuries AD): An Approach Through Diplomacy, » dans *Cultural Relations Between Byzantium and the Arabs*, éd. Ya'qūb Yūsuf Al-Hijji et Vassilios Christides (Athènes, 2007), pp. 88–97 ; Jakub Sypiański, « Arabo-Byzantine Relations in the 9th and 10th Centuries as an Area of Cultural Rivalry, » dans *Byzantium and the Arab World*, pp. 465–478.

20 Jonathan Shepard, « Byzantine Relations with the Outside World in the Ninth Century: An Introduction, » dans *Byzantium in the Ninth Century. Dead or Alive?*, éd. Leslie Brubaker (Aldershot, 1998), p. 169.

1. Pendant les premières années du règne de Théophile, il envoya son précepteur Jean le Grammairien, réputé pour ses talents astrologiques et mathématiques²¹, en ambassade auprès « Agarènes » à « Bagdād »²². Selon la *Continuation de Théophane* (x^e siècle), le motif de l'ambassade était la volonté de Théophile de « démontrer la richesse de l'empire ». Nos sources, notamment Jean Skylitzes (xi^e siècle), décrivent abondamment le spectacle grandiose offert par Jean à Bagdad, où il distribuait généreusement des cadeaux. Les qualités intellectuelles de Jean dans cette ambassade sont particulièrement soulignées : à la cour abbasside il « se fit remarquer par l'éloquence aisée qui coulait de ses lèvres »²³. C'est une de très rares occasions de voir les Byzantins souligner leurs efforts pour impressionner les autres, tandis qu'en général leur suprématie culturelle était naturelle, automatique et incontestable²⁴. Une source arabe assez inhabituelle, *Livre des dons et trésors*, un catalogue d'anecdotes sur les cadeaux envoyés et reçus par les dirigeants musulmans (écrit dans le troisième quart du xi^e siècle) mentionne que le calife al-Mamun a reçu des dons de « l'un des rois des Romains ». En réponse, il lui envoya de musc et de zibeline, « afin que [le roi des Romains] connût la gloire de l'Islam et la bénédiction que Dieu nous donne »²⁵. Il est peu probable qu'il ne s'agisse pas ici de la même ambassade que celle mentionnée dans les sources byzantines. Cet épisode est relaté par les sources postérieures, mais il est important car il

21 Louis Bréhier, « Un patriarche sorcier à Constantinople », *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 9 (1904), 261–268; Paul Magdalino, « The Road to Baghdad in the Thought-World of Ninth-Century Byzantium, » dans *Byzantium in the Ninth Century*, pp. 196–198 ; Paul Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), pp. 135–147.

22 John Rosser, « John the Grammarian's Embassy to Baghdad and the Recall of Manuel, » *Byzantinoslavica* 37 (1976), pp. 170–171; Koutrakou, « Highlights, » pp. 88–90; Alexander Vasiliev, *Византия и Арабы. Политические Отношения Византии и Арабов за время аморийской династии* (Saint-Petersbourg, 1900), pp. 94–95; trad. Marius Canard, et Henri Grégoire, *Byzance et les Arabes. Tome II. La dynastie macédonienne (867–959)* (Bruxelles, 1935), pp. 112–114; Lemerle, *Le premier*, p. 143; *Theophanes Continuatus*, éd. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn, 1838), pp. 95–99 et 119–121; Jean Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum*, éd. Moritz Pinder, et Theodor Büttner-Wobst, 3 vols (Bonn, 1897) 3:361; Jean Skylitzès, *Synopsis historiarum*, éd. Hans Thurn (Berlin, 1973), pp. 56–57; Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīḥ*, éd. Martijn Theodoor Houtsma, 2 vols (Leyde, 1883), 2:568.

23 *Theophanes Continuatus*, p. 95.

24 Paul Magdalino, « The Road to Baghdad in the Thought-world of Ninth-century Byzantium, » dans *Byzantium in the Ninth Century*, pp. 198–199.

25 *Kitāb adh-dhakhā'ir wa-t-tuḥaf*, éd. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah (Kuwait, 1959), récit 31, p. 28 (traduction : J. S.) ; Oleg Grabar, « The Shared Culture of Objects, » *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, éd. Henry Maguire (Washington D.C., 1997), p. 53.

lie la naissance de la rivalité culturelle en diplomatie arabo-byzantine avec les personnages de Théophile et Jean d'un côté et al-Mamun de l'autre.

2. Une fois rentré à Constantinople, Jean aurait persuadé l'empereur Théophile de construire un palais, dit de Bryas, « sur le modèle des constructions sarrasines »²⁶. Les interprétations anciennes (Bury²⁷, Ostrogorski²⁸, Mango)²⁹ avaient tendance à confiner cet épisode à la question du goût personnel. Or, A. Grabar³⁰, Treadgold³¹, Barber³², et surtout Keshani ont situé la construction du palais de Bryas dans son contexte politique³³, à savoir dans le grand programme de construction entamé par Théophile. Keshani souligne que cette entreprise aurait été précédée par une série d'attaques victorieuses contre les Arabes : « vue dans ce contexte, la commission du palais de Bryas apparaît comme la conclusion d'un cycle de vengeance de Théophile : c'était une sorte de trophée militaire. Un palais de style abbasside était le symbole éminent de l'ennemi vaincu et de sa richesse spectaculaire »³⁴.

3. Théophile aurait installé au palais impérial aussi des automates spectaculaires³⁵. Georges le Moine écrit dans la deuxième moitié du IX^e siècle : « Étant un amateur d'ornement, Théophile fit faire [...] un arbre d'or dans lequel étaient perchés des oiseaux qui gazouillaient musicalement par le biais

26 *Theophanes Continuatus*, pp. 98–99. Un récit bien plus modeste est donné par Syméon Magistros : *Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus* (CSHB 45), éd. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn, 1838), p. 634 = *Symeonis magistri et logothetae chronicon*, éd. Staffan Wahlgren (Berlin, 2006), pp. 223. Pour l'archéologie voir : Semavi Eyice, « Contributions à l'histoire de l'art byzantin : Quatre édifices inédits ou mal connus », *Cahiers Archéologiques* 10 (1959), 245–258; Alessandra Ricci, « Palazzo o monastero, Islam o Occidente: il complesso mediobizantino a Kücükalyi (Istanbul) », dans *Atti del III Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Medievale*, éd. Rosa Fiorillo et Paolo Perduto, 2 vols (Salerno, 2003), 1:515–519.

27 John Bury, *A History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil I* (London, 1912), p. 133.

28 George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (Oxford, 1956), p. 185.

29 Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1975), p. 194.

30 André Grabar, « Le succès des arts orientaux à la cour byzantine sous les Macédoniens, » *Munchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 2 (1951), p. 56.

31 Warren Treadgold, *The Byzantine Revival, 780–842* (Stanford, 1988), p. 294.

32 Charles Barber, « Reading the Garden in Byzantium: Nature and Sexuality, » *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 16 (1992), 1–20.

33 Hussein Keshani, « The Abbasid Palace of Theophilus: Byzantine Taste for the Arts of Islam, » *Al-Masaq* 16/1 (2004), 75–91, surtout 77.

34 Keshani, « The Abbasid Palace, » p. 86.

35 Keshani, « The Abbasid Palace, » p. 85; Gerard Brett, « The Automata in the Byzantine "Throne of Solomon", » *Speculum* 29 (1954), 477–487.

de certains appareils »³⁶. Selon des auteurs arabes³⁷, un automate presque identique, un arbre d'or avec des oiseaux sifflant et chantant se trouvait au palais de Bagdad où il fut exposé aux ambassadeurs byzantins en 917. Il est difficile d'établir l'antériorité de l'arbre bagdadien ou constantinopolitain, mais trois choses sont importantes à noter : (a) la même sémiotique culturelle commune aux deux cours³⁸, (b) incorporation de cette histoire dans la visite des ambassadeurs byzantins dans les sources arabes, (c) son association avec Théophile dans les sources byzantines.

4. L'épisode le plus intéressant est sans doute l'invitation³⁹ du célèbre savant constantinopolitain Léon le Mathématicien⁴⁰ à la cour abbasside. Selon les plus anciennes versions de cette histoire, datant du IX^e siècle⁴¹ Léon présente la lettre du calife à Théophile, qui apprend ainsi le prestige international de Léon acquis grâce à son savoir scientifique et ouvre pour lui une grande école à Constantinople⁴². Cet épisode est une indication claire de la prise de conscience (advenue plutôt en retard) du fleurissement culturel à Bagdad. Les intérêts intellectuels de Léon (la science et la philosophie grecques)⁴³, étaient pratiquement identiques au « philhellénisme » abbasside et très différents de ceux qui ont caractérisé la soi-disant « première renaissance byzantine » à partir de la seconde moitié du IX^e siècle, essentiellement rhétorique et historique.

36 Georges le Moine, *Chronicon*, éd. Carl de Boor [Leipzig, 1904 (réimpr. Stuttgart, 1978)], p. 793. Un récit identique se trouve chez Syméon Magistre, *Symeonis magistri et logothetae chronicon*, éd. Staffan Wahlgren, p. 218, ainsi que par Léon Grammaticus, *Chronicon*, éd. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn, 1842), p. 215.

37 Hilāl al-Ṣābi' était un historien de l'administration et de la cour abbasside (m. 1056). Son récit se trouve cité dans al-Ḥatīb al-Baġdādī, *Ta'rīḥ Baġdād*, éd. Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir Atā, 14 vols (Beirut, 1997), 1:117–120.

38 Cutler, « Les échanges, » pp. 58–59.

39 Paul Magdalino donne une analyse très perspicace de cet épisode : Magdalino, « The Road, » pp. 195–213.

40 Paul Lemerle, *Le premier*, pp. 148–149; Leone Montagnini, « Leone Il Matematico, un anello mancante nella storia della scienza, » *Studi sull'Oriente cristiano* 2 (2002), 89–108.

41 *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae chronicon*, pp. 227–228 ; *Georges le Moine continué*, éd. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn, 1838), pp. 805–806;

42 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, éd. et trad. Gyula Moravcsik et Romilly J. H. Jenkins (Washington, D.C., 1985), 13, pp. 66–70; Paul Magdalino, « The Road, » pp. 198–205; Lemerle, *Le premier*, p. 158.

43 On sait que sa bibliothèque contenait des traités de mécanique, géométrie et astronomie : Leone Montagnini, « Leone, » pp. 99–100; Jean Irigoin, « Survie et renouveau de la littérature antique à Constantinople (IX^e siècle), » *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 5 (1962), pp. 291–293; Lemerle, *Le premier*, pp. 169–172; Nigel G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (Londres, 1983), pp. 83–88.

Serait-ce uniquement une coïncidence ? L'intérêt des élites constantinopolitaines dans la première moitié du IX^e siècle pour les sciences et la philosophie est attesté par plusieurs manuscrits scientifiques copiés à cette période⁴⁴, phénomène exceptionnel dans l'histoire culturelle de l'empire. Tout à fait unique est le contenu de cette collection : mathématique et médical⁴⁵, ce qui correspond exactement aux types des manuscrits que cherchaient les Arabes à cette époque : à plusieurs reprises, les sources arabes nous informent des efforts des califes, notamment d'al-Mamun, pour obtenir des manuscrits grecs du « Roi des Romains »⁴⁶. Il est difficile à dire si ses manuscrits ont été copiés en lien avec la demande arabe, mais cette hypothèse est surement envisageable⁴⁷.

L'idéologie abbasside du IX^e siècle l'époque présente les Byzantins comme indignes de l'héritage des anciens Grecs, dont les véritables héritiers et défenseurs sont les musulmans⁴⁸. Bien évidemment, cette différenciation entre les Romains et les Grecs était destiné surtout pour le public du califat. Cependant, est-il possible que cette propagande a aussi atteint aussi Constantinople et que les Byzantins ont entendu qu'ils étaient « privés » de l'héritage grec par les propagandistes Abbassides ? C'est difficile à dire, mais les traces d'une réponse à un tel défi, énumérées ici, semblent émailler les sources byzantines parlant du règne de Théophile.

44 Filippo Ronconi, « La collection brisée. Pour une étude des milieux socioculturels liés à la “collection philosophique”, » dans *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine, le texte en tant que message immédiate*, éd. Paolo Odorico (Paris, 2012), pp. 137–166, contenant une bibliographie.

45 Parmi les auteurs des ouvrages transcrits on peut trouver : Euclide, Ptolémée, Théon d'Alexandrie, Paul d'Alexandrie, Archimède, Dioscoride, Paul d'Égine, Étienne d'Alexandrie.

46 Dans ces récits nous voyons : Mamun demandant à l'empereur une sélection de vieux manuscrits scientifiques ; Mamun recevant de l'empereur des ouvrages de Platon, Aristote, Hippocrate, Galien, Euclide et Ptolémée ; un calife ordonnant après la prise d'Amorion de prendre les ouvrages médicaux de la bibliothèque pour les traduire. Une collection de ces histoires est à trouver dans P.S. van Koningsveld, « Greek Manuscripts in the Early Abbasid Empire: Fiction and Facts about their Origin, Translation and Destruction, » *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 3–4 (1998), 345–372.

47 Jakub Sypiański, « Arabo-Byzantine Traffic of Manuscripts and the Connections between the Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement and the First Byzantine “Renaissance” (9th-10th Centuries), » dans *Byzantium and Renaissances. Dialogue of Cultures, Heritage of Antiquity. Tradition and Modernity*, éd. Michał Janocha, Aleksandra Sulikowska, et Irina Tatarova (Varsovie, 2012), pp. 177–194.

48 Nadia Maria El-Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed*, pp. 103–109 ; Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbāsid Society (2nd–4th/8th–10th Centuries)* (Londres et New York, 1998), pp. 75–94.

Qui plus est, au moins une source arabe semble attester vaguement les intérêts scientifiques de cet empereur. C'est le cas de la description de l'ambassade que Théophile envoya la fin de son règne à l'émir de Cordoue Abd ar-Rahman II (822–852). Cela constitue d'ailleurs la première instance de l'intérêt diplomatique de Constantinople pour al-Andalous. On pourrait constater de la source arabe une certaine familiarité de l'empereur avec les affaires internes du monde islamique⁴⁹. La réponse de l'émir aurait été apportée à Constantinople par deux émissaires andalous. L'un était connu comme *sāhib al-munayqila*, « maître de l'horloge », peut-être en référence à sa dextérité pour les dispositifs mécaniques et l'autre était Yaḥyā al-Ġazāl (772–866)⁵⁰, un célèbre poète de cour, un sage et érudit⁵¹. Il est fort intéressant que tous les deux ambassadeurs envoyés à Théophile se soient trouvés être des astrologues⁵², ce qui pourrait avoir un lien avec l'activité scientifique de Jean le Grammairien et Léon le Mathématicien.

En peu de mots, nos sources attribuent à la diplomatie de cette période une compétition de prestige, souvent dans le domaine scientifique. Cette rivalité pourrait être expliquée par des motivations externes – la volonté d'impressionner et d'intimider l'ennemi ; ainsi que par des motivations internes – le désir de rehausser l'autorité des Abbassides ou Théophile aux yeux de leurs sujets (du côté byzantin accompagné par l'ambition de prouver les faveurs divines accordées à l'iconoclasme et du côté musulman par la volonté de se référer aux traditions persanes). Je n'exclus pas non plus une explication psychologique – la simple vanité ordinaire des souverains et l'ambition personnelle de briller devant les autres.

Le 20 janvier 842 l'empereur Théophile mourut de la maladie supposément provoquée par le choc de la prise de la ville d'Amorion par calife Mutasim quatre

49 Le récit de cette dernière ambassade a été écrit par ibn Hayyan (XI^e s.). Malheureusement le seul manuscrit qui le contenait a été égaré au cours du XX^e siècle et nous ne pouvons que faire confiance à Évariste Lévi-Provençal qui a inclus ce texte dans l'article « Un échange d'ambassades entre Cordoue et Byzance au IX^e siècle, » *Byzantion* 12 (1937), 1–24. Également: André Miquel, *La géographie humaine du monde musulman jusqu'au milieu du XI^e siècle* (Paris, 1980), pp. 345–347; Al-Maqqari, *Analectes sur l'histoire et la littérature des Arabes d'Espagne*, éd. Reinhart Pieter, Anne Dozy et al., 2 vols (Leyde, 1855), 1:223 et 631.

50 Lévi-Provençal, « Un échange, » p. 6–7.

51 Plus d'informations sur ce personnage : Sara M. Pons-Sanchez, « Whom did al-Ghazal Meet? An Exchange of Embassies Between the Arabs From Al-Andalus and the Vikings, » *Saga Book* 28 (2004), 5–28; Peter Heath, « Knowledge, » dans *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, ed. María Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, and Michael Sells (Cambridge, 2000), p. 109.

52 Lévi-Provençal, « Un échange, ».

ans avant. Il est bien connu que cette mort annonçait la fin de l'iconoclasme, officiellement dénoncé et aboli un an plus tard. Je voudrais alléguer que c'était peut-être aussi la fin d'un certain modèle culturel, qui allait être démantelé au cours des décennies qui suivraient. La petite renaissance scientifique de Jean le Grammairien, Théophile et Léon le Mathématicien est alors terminée – ce bouleversement pourrait être le sujet pour une autre étude⁵³. Entretemps, d'autres sphères de contacts byzantins avec le monde islamique entrent au premier plan dans la littérature.

L'hagiographie des soldats de la frontière

La zone frontalière entre Byzance et le califat qui s'étendait de la Cilicie à l'Arménie est restée troublée après les premières conquêtes arabes. Cette vaste région dans les montagnes de Taurus était appelée *al-tuḡūr* par les Arabes et *ta stomia* par les Byzantins. C'était une sorte de *no man's land* fortement fortifié et militarisé où les combats acquéraient graduellement un caractère religieux⁵⁴. Du côté musulman, les califes ne cessèrent d'organiser avec une fréquence presque annuelle des razzias dont le moteur le plus important était des volontaires, les *ḡāzī* – guerriers spécialisés en guerre sainte contre les mécréants⁵⁵. Cela attribuait peu à peu une valeur religieuse à ce combat et au cours des premiers trois siècles, la spécificité de cette zone catalysa la conception du djihad, la récompense divine pour la guerre contre les mécréants⁵⁶. De côté byzantin s'est formée aussi une caste de guerriers frontaliers luttant contre les musulmans (appelés *akritai*) peut-être par émulation du modèle musulman

53 Une fascinante prospection préliminaire a été menée par Juan Signes Codoñer, « Helenos y Romanos: La cultura bizantina y el Islam en el siglo IX, » *Byzantion* 72 (2002), 404–448.

54 John Haldon et Hugh Kennedy, « The Arab-Byzantine Frontier in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries: Military Organisation and Society in the Borderlands, » *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 19 (1980), 79–116; Michael Bonner, *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War: Studies in the Jihad and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier* (New Haven, 1996); idem, « Some Observations Concerning the Early Development of Jihad on the Arab-Byzantine Frontier, » dans *Arab-Byzantine Relations in Early Islamic Times*, éd. Michael Bonner (Londres, 2004), pp. 401–427.

55 Irène Mélikoff, « *Ghāzī*, » *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, vol. 2 (Leyde, 1965).

56 L'idée qui ne semble pas avoir été prononcée durant les premières conquêtes et qui est très mal attesté par les sources : Walter Kaegi, « Confronting Islam: Emperors Versus Caliphs (641–c. 850), » dans *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500–1492*, éd. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge, 2008), p. 368.

ou simplement comme résultat de la même situation sociale et militaire⁵⁷. Cette confrontation militaire prolongée a produit une sorte de communauté culturelle, où les mêmes thèmes et formes de la poésie épique orale dédiée aux exploits guerriers unissaient les deux côtés de la frontière⁵⁸.

Les intérêts et les préoccupations de cette zone ont trouvé au milieu du IX^e siècle un écho dans une production littéraire constantinopolitaine visant à mettre en valeur les sacrifices de ces soldats frontaliers dans la lutte contre les musulmans. Le premier exemple de cette hagiographie militaire antimusulmane est la *Passion des quarante-deux martyrs d'Amorion*⁵⁹. Elle raconte le sort de quarante-deux soldats défenseurs d'Amorion, qui après la défaite sont emmenés en captivité à Samarra, la capitale abbasside entre 836 et 892. Après avoir refusé de se convertir, les quarante-deux officiers byzantins sont exécutés devant le calife. Le sort d'Amorion – la chute et le pillage de la ville par le calife Mutasim en 838 – a été l'événement marquant du règne de Théophile et l'un des événements les plus dévastateurs de la longue histoire des incursions arabo-musulmanes en Anatolie byzantine. La défaite signifiait la fin des rêves militaires et politiques de Théophile. L'iconoclasme, censé attirer la faveur divine, se conclut par un désastre humiliant.

Il existe un certain nombre de textes relatant le martyre des amoriens, dont quatre datent du IX^e siècle. La version la plus ancienne a été rédigée par Michel le Syncelle⁶⁰. On peut imaginer que cet iconodoule convaincu a accueilli avec une grande satisfaction la nouvelle de la catastrophe subie par Théophile à Amorion. Comme il l'avait fait avant dans sa réfutation de l'islam, il utilise les modèles provenant de la Syrie et Palestine (par exemple la *Passion des soixante martyrs de Gaza* du VII^e siècle)⁶¹ pour exhorter les Constantinopolitains à s'opposer à l'islam.

57 Agostino Pertusi, « Tra storia e leggenda. Akritai e ghazi sulla frontiera orientale di Bisanzio, » *Actes du XIV^e Congrès International d'Études Byzantines, Rapports II* (Bucharest, 1974), pp. 27–72.

58 Henri Grégoire, *Autour de l'épopée byzantine* (Londres, 1975), pp. 371–382 (« Échanges épiques arabo-grecs. Sharkan-Charzanis »); Vassilios Christides, « Arabic Influence on the Acritic Cycle, » *Byzantion* 49 (1979), 94–109; Nicolas Oikonomides, « L'épopée de Digénis et la frontière orientale de Byzance aux X^e et XI^e siècles, » *Travaux et mémoires* 7 (1979), 375–397.

59 Athina Kolia-Dermitzaki, « The Execution of the Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorion: Proposing an Interpretation, » *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 14 (2002), 141–162.

60 Datée par entre 845 et 846 : Kolia-Dermitzaki, « Michael the Syncellos, » p. 630.

61 David Woods, « The Passion of the Sixty Martyrs of Gaza », *ChMR* 1, pp. 190–192.

Il n'est difficile d'interpréter les dynamiques sociales derrière la création de cet ouvrage. À première vue on pourrait le considérer comme un projet antimusulman et une sorte d'alliance idéologique entre les milieux militaires et frontaliers d'un côté (profondément touchés par la défaite d'Amorion) et les milieux palestino-stoudites, iconodoules et hostiles à Théophile (incarnés ici par Michel le Syncelle, probablement le premier auteur de cette passion). Néanmoins, ces deux milieux avaient pu être opposés : il est probable que les soldats d'Anatolie étaient principalement des iconoclastes, donc ennemis idéologiques de Michel. La passion d'Amorion pourrait être alors plutôt une utilisation pragmatique des événements d'Amorion par Michel, sans sympathie ni liens personnels avec les soldats. Quoi qu'il en soit, c'est la première fois que la sphère « frontalière » des contacts arabo-byzantins trouve un écho à Constantinople et s'insère dans la littérature byzantine. Je crois qu'on peut considérer la passion des quarante-deux martyrs d'Amorion comme un recours idéologique contre l'iconoclasme et contre le danger de la conversion à l'islam de la population byzantine.

Conclusion

Les trois groupes sociaux en contact avec les Arabes que je décris, les melkites, les élites dirigeantes constantinopolitaines et les soldats frontaliers ont contribué différemment à l'amélioration de la connaissance et de la compréhension de la religion et de la production culturelle des « Sarrasins ». Ils ont produit ou influencé trois réactions différentes à l'islam et à la culture arabe. Celles-ci étaient la conséquence des principales préoccupations de ces groupes dans leurs contacts avec les musulmans.

Une série d'œuvres produites par le cercle palestino-stoudite préoccupées par la menace de l'islam et par le sort des chrétiens orthodoxes de Syrie-Palestine servait à mon avis comme le canal de promotion des intérêts des communautés orthodoxes en Syrie-Palestine, un appel aux élites constantinopolitains et à l'empereur de consacrer plus d'attention à la maléfique doctrine religieuse des Sarrasins et de conférer sa protection et son patronage aux melkites.

Après la restauration de l'iconoclasme en 815, l'activité du cercle palestino-stoudite cesse. À partir du 829 un autre type de réponse au défi arabo-musulman commence avec Théophile : la rivalité culturelle. Ses moteurs reposaient sur la détermination de Théophile de prouver la validité de l'iconoclasme et peut-être sur le désir de contrer le poids culturel arabe dans les contacts diplomatiques. Quant à ces derniers, il me semble que sans envisager l'hypothèse

de l'influence arabe sur les élites constantinopolitaines, on ne peut pas expliquer certains épisodes à cette période, telles que la prétendue invitation de Léon à Bagdad, l'intellectualisation des ambassades, les tentatives byzantines d'impressionner les musulmans, la construction d'un palais de style arabe à Constantinople, la production intense des manuscrits scientifiques. Tous ces cinq phénomènes n'avaient pas de précédent dans la précédente histoire des contacts des Byzantins ni avec les Arabes, ni avec d'autres peuples.

Avec le choc de la défaite d'Amorion, un autre élément social commence à influencer la réaction littéraire byzantine concernée par l'islam. Les soldats de la zone frontalière voient alors leurs propres préoccupations exprimées dans la littérature et liées à la polémique anti-islamique du cercle palestino-stoudite.

Ma méthode d'analyse de la réaction byzantine à l'islam se concentre sur les acteurs sociaux des interactions arabo-byzantines et sur l'influence de leurs préoccupations communautaires sur les formes de la réaction byzantine à l'islam. Elle peut être employée pour les siècles suivants. Des nouvelles voies de contacts s'ouvrent, quand au cours de la deuxième moitié du IX^e siècle et au X^e siècle des nouveaux groupes sociaux deviennent des acteurs des relations arabo-byzantines. On en peut nommer au moins deux principales : (1) les prisonniers de guerre musulmans, souvent détenus à Constantinople, dont les échanges sur la rivière Lamos acquièrent une forme cérémonialisée et une signification idéologique,⁶² et (2) les marchands « syriens », bien attestés au X^e siècle dans le Livre de l'Éparque.⁶³

Les trois formes de la réaction byzantine à l'islam (la polémique anti-islamique, la rivalité culturelle et la « martyralisation » des combats frontaliers) qui apparaissent dans la première moitié du IX^e siècle seront perpétuées et élaborées dans l'avenir. La polémique antimusulmane à Constantinople trouvera dans la deuxième moitié du IX^e siècle son plus grand auteur dans Nicétas de Byzance avec sa *Réfutation du Coran*⁶⁴. La lutte contre les musulmans dans l'Asie Mineure stimulait une connaissance approfondie de l'ennemi et de sa religion. Les rares tentatives de la part des Byzantins d'adopter la notion de

62 Koray Durak, « Performance and Ideology in the Exchange of Prisoners Between the Byzantines and the Islamic Near Easterners in the Early Middle Ages, » dans *Medieval and Early Modern Performance in the Eastern Mediterranean*, éd. Arzu Öztürkmen et Evelyn Birge Vitz (Turnhout, 2014), pp. 167–180.

63 *Das Eparchenbuch Leons des Weisen*, éd. Johannes Koder (Vienne, 1991), pp. 94–97.

64 Antonio Rigo, « Nicetas of Byzantium », *ChMR* 1, pp. 751–756.

guerre sainte (Léon VI, Nicéphore Phocas)⁶⁵ seront inspirées par la longue expérience avec les *ghazis* musulmans. Parallèlement, les constantinopolitains développeront l'image des Arabes comme un peuple de grande civilisation, « une nation égale à celle des Romains » - comme déclare un patriarche constantinopolitain au X^e siècle.⁶⁶

Il serait difficile de prouver que la première moitié du IX^e siècle fut une période de « découverte » de l'islam à Constantinople, parce qu'on sait très peu sur la perception byzantine de l'islam dans la période précédente, aux VII^e et VIII^e siècles. Néanmoins, cette période a produit les premières réactions explicites à l'islam et à la culture arabe émanant de l'Empire. En plus, il est significatif que les acteurs des échanges derrière ces réactions littéraires soient bien traçables et on peut identifier leurs intérêts et préoccupations – on ne peut pas les trouver dans la période précédente.

Les parallèles et les répétitions dans les comportements des Byzantins et des Arabes pourraient, à mon avis, être expliqués de deux façons. La première explication serait la naissance d'une communauté de langage culturel entre les Byzantins et les Arabo-musulmans qui auraient développé des *patterns* de communication mutuellement compréhensibles. Selon la deuxième, nous aurions affaire à la réutilisation des récits semi-légendaires sur certains épisodes des relations arabo-byzantines, pétrifiés et élaborés comme *topoi* littéraires. Une comparaison approfondie des sources byzantines et arabes permettrait peut-être de distinguer ces *topoi* (produits pour l'usage interne) et les pratiques interculturels partagés (utilisés à l'extérieur, avec les étrangers).

65 La bibliographie actuelle est à trouver dans Ioannis Stouraitis, « Jihād and Crusade: Byzantine Positions Towards the Notions of “Holy War”, » *Byzantina Symmeikta* 21 (2011), 11–12.

66 Nicolas le Mystique (patriarche de Constantinople 901–907 et 912–925), *Letters*, éd. et trad. en anglais, Romilly J. H. Jenkins et Leendert G. Westerink (Washington, D.C., 1973) pp. 2–13: « Dès qu'il y a deux souverainetés, une des Sarrasins et une des Romains, qui prédominent et rayonnent sur la souveraineté terrestre, comme les deux les plus lumineuses étoiles dans le firmament – il faut pour cette raison vivre en communauté comme frères et non pas en discorde provoquée par nos divergences en matière des coutumes, valeurs et religion. (traduction: J. S.) »

Voir aussi Maria Vaiou, « Nicolas Mysticus », dans *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, éd. Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala, Barbara Roggema, David Thomas et al., 6 vols (Leyde, Boston, 2010), 2:178–179.

PART 6

A Metropolitan Education: Texts & Contexts



Byzantine Manuscript Colophons and the Prosopography of Scribal Activity

Jeremiah Coogan

1 Introduction*

Byzantine scribes often appended notes to their completed handiwork, providing miscellaneous information about their lives and craft. These colophons frequently include valuable information such as the copyist's name, the date, and the location. Yet while scholars have analysed the colophons in numerous ways, no one has systematically investigated the invaluable evidence that they provide about the contexts of manuscript transmission.

While palaeography can reveal the approximate dates of Byzantine manuscripts, it tells us far less about the contexts through which they were transmitted. Moreover, since extant manuscripts have most often been preserved in monasteries, scholars frequently assume that literary textual activity thrived primarily, if not exclusively, in monastic contexts.¹ Yet while this may have been true in the Latin West,² the preserved manuscript colophons from Byzantine Greek texts compel us to nuance significantly any such assumption of monastic dominance in the copying of manuscripts. This question is distinct from where texts in the Byzantine period were composed, although the answers may overlap significantly. Further, while the approach of this essay is prosopographical, it focuses on manuscripts themselves. A prosopography

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1 See Leila Avrin, *Scribes, Script, and Books: The Book Arts from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Chicago, 1991); Christopher De Hamel, *Medieval Craftsmen: Scribes and Illuminations* (Buffalo, 1992); Niels Gaul, "Scribes, Byzantine," in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, ed. Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (Oxford, 2012); Malcolm B. Parkes, *Their Hands Before Our Eyes: A Closer Look at Scribes* (Aldershot, 2008).

2 For qualifications of even this claim, see for example *Documentary Culture and the Laity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Warren C. Brown et al. (Cambridge, 2013).

of the scribes, discussing their origins, language, training and the like, would require a separate investigation.

For this project, the corpus of evidence is the dated Greek colophons up to the year AD 1200, a total of some 401 manuscripts. While earlier colophons, such as those in *Codex Sinaiticus* and *Codex Coislinianus*, offer tantalizing clues about the role of Pamphilus, Origen, and the library of Caesarea Maritima in the manuscript transmission of Late Antiquity, the limited evidence from these colophons remains essentially anecdotal.³ Systematic analysis stands on a firm footing only with the appearance of dated colophons, starting with the *Uspensky Gospels* in AD 835. Any exploration of Byzantine colophons must rely on the work of Kirsopp and Silva Lake, who published transcriptions of most known early colophons.⁴ In the last seventy years, nothing has superseded the Lakes' monumental work.⁵ While focused only on dated manuscripts, the catalogue provides the most reliable corpus for our purposes because virtually all manuscripts containing a colophon also include a date.⁶

Once a research corpus has been established, evidentiary challenges continue to plague investigation. If one compares this prosopographical analysis to a survey, one is immediately struck by a key methodological challenge. How does one account for those who, for whatever reason, did not complete the survey? In other words, how representative is the picture that colophons

3 Among others, see Andrew J. Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea* (Leiden, 2003); Marco Frenschkowski, "Studien zur Geschichte der Bibliothek von Cäsarea," in *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their World*, ed. Thomas Kraus and Tobias Nicklas (Leiden, 2006), pp. 53–104; Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, Mass., 2006). See also Kim Haines-Eitzen, "Imagining the Alexandrian Library and a 'Bookish' Christianity," in *Reading New Testament Papyri in Context*, ed. Claire Clivaz and Joseph Verheyden (Leuven, 2011), pp. 207–218.

4 Kirsopp and Silva Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the Year 1200*, 10 vols. with index (Boston, 1934–1945). Throughout this essay, colophons are numbered in accordance with the Lakes' catalogue. In a handful of instances, I have regularized spelling of titles for more accurate analysis.

5 The Lakes focused on major manuscript collections in Athens, Athos, Berlin, Florence, Grottaferrata, Jerusalem, London, Messina, Milan, Moscow, Naples, Oxford, Paris, Patmos, Rome, St. Petersburg (then Leningrad), the Meteora, Venice, and Vienna. Moreover, their catalogue was compiled more than seventy years ago. As a result, the extensive corpus remains incomplete. More manuscripts exist that could enhance the picture sketched in this article, but it is quite unlikely that they would change the overall argument.

6 Further investigations might explore the handful of colophons that originate in this period, but have been copied later, or even translated into Latin, Syriac, or Armenian. When textually reliable, these would offer equally good data.

provide? If certain settings were more likely to generate colophons, how would anyone know? As a result, colophons offer only second-order evidence. They reflect where the copying of manuscripts was happening in a way that produced colophons. No obvious tendencies exist in which sorts of manuscripts contain colophons, but only a project much longer than this essay could firmly substantiate that claim. Until then, conclusions based on colophon data must remain somewhat tentative.

Vagaries of preservation might further skew our conclusions. Up until the modern period, most Byzantine manuscripts were preserved in monasteries. Arguably, this might privilege those manuscripts produced in monasteries, or at least the sorts of manuscripts likely to be produced in monasteries. Other skewing effects might also be at work, based on the vicissitudes of geography and history. While this problem cannot be entirely eradicated, manuscripts moved around a good bit over the centuries, a fact which significantly dilutes the effect of serendipitous preservation.⁷ Further, since this essay argues for a less central role for monasteries than has commonly been assumed, the possibility that monasteries are overrepresented in the data does not undermine the conclusions.

A third problem is the reality that some colophons have been forged, as Ernest Colwell compellingly demonstrated with respect to manuscript B 26 from the Athos Laura.⁸ Since the present approach is prosopographical, the forgery of any individual manuscript is largely irrelevant. Verisimilitude is, after all, the only way to pass off a forgery effectively. Not only are forgeries diluted by the relative mass of evidence, they are also unlikely to have slanted the data in any consistent way – beyond the general tendencies to claim greater antiquity or holier origin. Nonetheless, forgery offers a further challenge to studying colophons, especially if a significant number have been forged.

2 Scribes as Monks?

The vast majority of extant literary manuscripts from the Byzantine period are religious ones. As noted already, preservation has preferred some texts to others, but the textual centre of gravity for the ninth to twelfth centuries was certainly religious: biblical texts, commentaries, hagiography, and liturgy. As a

⁷ For example, nos. 73 and 373, copied by the same scribe, come from manuscript collections in different cities. Other examples could be multiplied.

⁸ Ernest Colwell, "Method in Validating Byzantine Date-Colophons: A Study of Athos, Laura B.26," in *Studies in Methodology in New Testament Textual Criticism* (Leiden, 1969), pp. 142–147.

result of this textual preponderance, scribal copying also centred on ecclesiastical settings. Yet do the preserved colophons support the assumption that explicitly monastic settings dominated the landscape of manuscript production? The present study attempts to answer this question.

Of the 401 manuscripts in the corpus, approximately one quarter – 118, to be precise – are directly identified by the colophon with a monastery. Yet since many colophons include no geographic indication, the titles by which copyists describe themselves provide a more accurate picture. Other than dating formulae, the scribe's name is the most frequently cited datum in Byzantine colophons, providing sufficient evidence for a basic sketch. Further, an acute sensitivity to social standing makes these self-descriptions valuable to the present investigation. Alongside frequent expressions of humility, copyists employed a wide variety of titles to identify themselves: *monachos*, *presbyteros*, *nomikos*, *notarios*, and so forth. Indeed, rather than limiting themselves to a single title, copyists most commonly expressed different aspects of their ecclesiastical or social identities by listing multiple titles. For heuristic purposes, these can be divided into three categories: (1) expressly monastic titles, (2) ecclesiastical titles that do not require monastic status, and (3) professional titles, some of which may also occur within monastic or ecclesiastical settings. The resulting multifaceted descriptions enable us to sketch the multiple settings for textual transmission. This approach not only clarifies the extent to which monks and monasteries were the context for scribal copying, but also illuminates other geographic and social contexts. The study demonstrates that significant secondary *loci* appear in both the episcopal apparatus and secular administrative professions. While intuitively unsurprising, this conclusion nonetheless counters a common assumption of modern scholarship.

2.1 *Monastic Titles*

I exhort you, whoever reads these things, pray also on behalf of the one who wrote it, the worthless and sinful monk Gerasimos, called preceptor and archimandrite in the New Monastery on the Island of Chios, so that I might find mercy in the Day of Judgment.⁹

The first example derives from an explicitly monastic context. At the end of a codex containing monks' *Lives* (*bioi*), the scribe Gerasimos exhorts readers

9 “Παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς ὅσοι ἀναγινώσκετε ταῦτα, εὐχέσθε καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ γράψαντος εὐτελοῦς μοναχοῦ Γερασίου ἀμαρτωλοῦ, τοῦ χρηματίσαντος καθηγουμένου καὶ ἀρχιμανδρίτου τῇ ἐν τῇ νήσῳ χίῳ νέᾳ μονῇ, ὅπως εὖροιμι ἔλεος ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως [...]” (no. 13).

to pray on his behalf. While describing himself as a “worthless monk” (*eutelēs monachos*) – a *topos* of monastic colophons – Gerasimos nonetheless goes on to inform us that he is a preceptor (*kathēgoumenos*) and archimandrite (*archimandritēs*) in the New Monastery on the Aegean island of Chios. Fortunately for our curiosity, Gerasimos was not the only monk to combine professions of humility with valuable information about status and location.

The corpus for this project contains 139 manuscripts from self-identified monks (*monachos* or *monazōn*, 137) or abbots (7),¹⁰ a number of whom further identify themselves as presbyters (*presbyteros*, 27), priests (*hiereus*, 15), or readers (*anagnōstēs*, 2). Of those who use explicitly monastic titles, only four describe themselves using terms from the scribal profession: *notarios* (2), *logothetēs* (1), and *bibliographos* (1). To this tally of monastic copyists, we must add the further twenty-one copyists who wrote in monasteries but described themselves by other titles, whether ecclesiastical (*presbyteros*, 8; *hiereus*, 3; *deuteropsaltēs*, 1; *diakonos*, 2; *anagnōstēs*, 2; *klērikos*, 1; *hēgoumenos*, 3) or scribal (*notarios*, 2; *kalligraphos*, 2; *grapheus*, 1). Most likely, these were also monks. Nonetheless, it may be significant that of 160 scribes who identify themselves as monastic, whether by location or title, only nine employ professional scribal titles. By contrast, a significant and entirely unsurprising overlap emerges between the other two categories: almost half of monastic copyists – sixty-eight in total – fulfil ecclesiastical roles that do not require monastic status.¹¹ The absence of significant overlap between scribal titles and indications of monastic context suggests that most manuscripts whose colophons include scribal titles, but not any indication of monastic origin by either title or location, are *prima facie* more likely to originate in a non-monastic context.

2.2 Ecclesiastical Titles

This text was written [...] by the hand of Theophylaktos, presbyter and administrator [...]¹²

10 In addition to those with the titles ἀββάς (2), παπᾶς (1), and πρωτόπαπας (1), this category includes monks with the titles καθηγούμενος (2) and ἡγούμενος (1), although these latter two titles might also refer to a bishop outside the monastic context.

11 Forty-nine explicitly identified monks and an additional nineteen individuals in monasteries are described with various ecclesiastical titles. While self-identified monks are most likely to have worked in a monastery, one might also ask if some with other ecclesiastical titles might have lived outside the monastic context without jeopardising their claim to the title of “monk”.

12 “Ἐγράφη αὐτὴ ἡ δέλτος [...] διὰ χειρὸς Θεοφυλάκτου πρεσβυτέρου καὶ νομικοῦ [...]” (no. 367).

The second category of self-descriptions contains ecclesiastical titles that do not imply monastic status, but it becomes immediately apparent that the majority of ecclesiastics also identify themselves as monks. Only fifty-nine copyists, or slightly more than half of the total, use ecclesiastical titles – *presbyteros*, *hiereus*, *anagnōstēs*, *klērikos*,¹³ and so forth – without monastic ones.¹⁴ Furthermore, the constellation of titles used to describe these fifty-nine non-monastic copyists is significantly different. As in the monastic category, the majority identify as presbyters (27), readers (10), priests (8), deacons (*dia-konos*, 6), or clerics (*klērikos*, 6). Now, however, roughly an eighth hold a professional scribal title: *kalligraphos* (4), *notarios* (2), *nomikos* (1), or *chronographos* (1). Our second example, the copyist Theophylaktos, exemplifies this difference. While dispensing with any self-denigrating expressions of humility, he identifies himself as both *presbyteros* and *nomikos*.

A second significant feature also emerges from the titles of these ecclesiastics. Combined with designations for the usual grades in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, other titles suggest an episcopal staff: *synkellos* (1),¹⁵ *koubouklēsios* (1),¹⁶ and *phylax* (1). Perhaps the *chronographos* (annalist, 1) is also best located in such a context. Notably, none of these titles occur in our colophons from expressly monastic contexts. All of these descriptors designate individuals who might have worked in a monastic context, and it is likely that at least some did, but, given monks' tendency to self-identify, nothing justifies the assumption that all or most of these copyists resided in monasteries.

2.3 Professional Titles

[...] the text before you was written by the hand of Nikephoros, first-rank notary [...]¹⁷

Professional scribal titles provided yet another way for copyists to identify themselves. Not only do they imply textual expertise, they also indicate social

13 Notably, *κληρικὸς* never occurs with monastic epithets or in monasteries, while it does occasionally overlap with scribal titles.

14 As noted above, a handful (19) of ecclesiastics without monastic titles also locate themselves in monasteries.

15 The *σύγκελλος* designated the personal advisor of a bishop, specializing in questions of administration and ecclesiastical law. The individual was generally an ordained priest.

16 The *κουβουκλήσιος* was the court title given to patriarchal chamberlains, the ecclesial equivalent to an imperial *κουβικουλάριος*. They could be either priests or deacons.

17 “[...] ἐγράφη ἡ παροῦσα δέλτος διὰ χειρὸς Νικηφόρου πρωτονοταρίου [...]” (no. 28).

position, perhaps even more than assertions of monastic or ecclesiastical status. Already we have seen a handful of these titles used in monastic (8) and ecclesiastical (9) contexts. Yet in the majority of the thirty-six colophons with professional scribal designations, the copyist does not employ monastic or ecclesiastical descriptors. Some of these titles appear exclusively with other professional designations – *grammateus* (1), *grammatikos* (2), *taboularios* (1) – and never in monasteries.¹⁸ Even those that occasionally overlap with monastic or ecclesiastical titles are far more likely to occur independently or only mixed with other professional titles: *grapheus* (1 of 2 overlap), *kalligraphos* (2 of 10), *notarios* (4 of 14), and *nomikos* (1 of 2). Only in the case of *logothetēs* and *bibliographos* do we find an exception. Both occur only once, in each case describing a monk. As we have already seen, there is very little overlap between professional and monastic categories, despite the frequent use of multiple titles. As a result, in the absence of specific indications of a monastic context, scholars should not assume that copyists who used professional scribal titles were also monks.

While they might operate within the contexts of either ecclesiastical or imperial administration – although, of course, the two were never entirely separate – titles such as *notarios* and *nomikos* designated status in Byzantine legal and administrative hierarchies.¹⁹ Further, only in purely professional self-descriptions, and never in monasteries, do copyists mention higher professional grades such as *prōtonotarios* (1) and *prōtokalligraphos* (1), indicating participation in the developed hierarchy of scribal and administrative professions.²⁰ Recognizing that professional scribal titles merge into the Byzantine civil service, a number of other self-descriptions from the manuscript colophons make sense. Titles of the imperial hierarchy such as *prōtopatharios* and *patrikios* – each attested once in the colophons, but not

18 The γραμματεὺς designated merely a clerk, scribe, or secretary. While the term γραμματικὸς could share this basic meaning, it could refer to a grammarian or teacher of literature. The ταβουλάριος designates a registry-clerk and virtually requires a chancellery context of some sort.

19 The γραφεὺς denoted the lowest point in the professional hierarchy, a simple copyist or transcriber. While potentially requiring more specialized competence, the καλλιγράφος (occasionally καλληγράφος) likewise carries no particular implications of higher training or a bureaucratic context. The title νοτάριος (from Latin *notarius*), on the other hand, referred to a legal notary or tachygrapher, a description appropriate only to an administrative context of one kind or another. The νομικὸς designated either a lawyer or at least an administrator skilled in legal matters.

20 These are already included in the totals for καλλιγράφος and νοτάριος. Admittedly, with a sample size of one occurrence each, this argument has only suggestive force.

combined with specifically ecclesiastical titles – make the most sense as part of the legal-administrative apparatus.²¹ Not only notaries and lawyers, but also the higher echelons of this system contributed to manuscript production. The titles distinctive to an episcopal staff (*synkellos*, 1; *koubouklēsios*, 1; *phylax*, 1; *chronographos*, 1)²² also contribute to this picture, since ecclesiastical and imperial hierarchies operated with many of the same mechanisms and in many of the same urban settings.

While the data are predictably untidy, it is not difficult to sketch a picture dominated by *two* main centres of textual activity, although scribal copying was undoubtedly not limited to these two settings. As might be expected based on the predominantly religious nature of transmitted literary texts, both are to some extent ecclesiastical. On the one hand, monasteries remain unchallenged as the most significant location for copying manuscripts. On the other, members of the episcopal apparatus and professionals within the Byzantine legal-administrative hierarchy also copied literary texts. By no means were monastic and administrative contexts impermeable to one another, yet, despite the ubiquitous use of multiple titles by individual copyists, and the common overlap of both monks and scribal professionals with the ecclesiastical sphere, the two groups show surprisingly little overlap.

3 One Scribe, Many Colophons

By using manuscript colophons to sketch the prosopography of scribes, this study has so far treated each manuscript as a distinct datum. Results are weighted by extant productivity, rather than by individual scribes themselves, and thus better approximate centres of scribal activity. Nonetheless, cases where the same scribe copied multiple manuscripts provide a way to assess these tentative conclusions. Does a composite of the colophons from an individual scribe display the same tendencies as my prosopographical survey of individual colophons?

21 Indeed, it would not make sense for the senatorial titles *πατρίκιος* (equivalent to the Latin *patricius*) and *πρωτοσπαθάριος* to occur in either a monastic or ecclesiastical context, while the imperial court is the natural milieu.

22 Although in this last case (*ἀναγνώστης χρονογράφος*), the title *χρονογράφος* seems located in an ecclesiastical context, probably that of an episcopal staff, the title itself could just as easily belong in the secular administrative hierarchy.

The corpus includes at least eight scribes who each wrote more than one manuscript (three of them named Ioannes). Of these, three consistently identify themselves the same way: Theodoros (*monachos*, nos. 35 and 343), Ephraim (*monachos*, nos. 44 and 86), and Ioannes (*monachos kai presbyteros*, nos. 230 and 338). Another Ioannes, working on Athos, consistently calls himself a monk, though he uses a variety of self-deprecating descriptions (nos. 89, 91, 92, 220, 222).

The final four descriptions offer more insight. A monk named Bartholomaios identified himself as *eutelēs monachos* in AD 1104 (no. 303), but the next year, he called himself an *anagnōstēs monachos* in two additional manuscripts (nos. 305 and 306). While this may indicate that he used the title *anagnōstēs* inconsistently, the change more likely suggests his progression to the office of reader. Another scribe (not necessarily a monk) named Leon, first identifies himself as *presbyteros kai hēgoumenos kalligraphos* (no. 285), but later only as *elachistos presbyteros hēgoumenos* (no. 103).²³ Bartholomaios' progression is easy to explain, but Leon's abandonment of the designation *kalligraphos* is stranger. Possibly, he no longer used the title after he did not hold an official post as *kalligraphos*, but this is pure conjecture. In another pair of manuscripts we find a scribe named Kyriakos who identifies himself first only as *presbyteros* (no. 266) and later as *monachos hamartōlos presbyteros* (no. 268).²⁴ Similarly a third Ioannes identifies himself in one manuscript as *eutelēs monachos kai presbyteros* (no. 230) and in a second, roughly contemporaneous manuscript as simply *presbyteros* (no. 338).

Inconsistencies in the cases of Ioannes, Kyriakos, and Leon urge caution. Monks might not have always identified themselves as such and those with a claim to professional scribal titles might not have always used them. On the other hand, there are no surprising groupings. We have already seen that some presbyters resident in monasteries did not identify themselves as monks. Similarly, ecclesiastics using the title of *kalligraphos* are unsurprising, though we might wish for more consistency. With only eight examples, this exercise is largely anecdotal, but it suggests that the overlap between monastic and ecclesiastical categories might be even greater than directly demonstrated by scribes' self-designations, while the imperial chancellery seems to remain a separate context.

²³ For the benefit of the doubt, we have counted the title of ἡγούμενος in our tally of monks above.

²⁴ There is some debate about whether this is the same scribe: see Lake, *Index*, pp. 76–77.

4 Texts and Contexts

Both *loci* for Byzantine textual activity are, broadly speaking, ecclesiastical. Nonetheless, might there be a discernible logic to what texts are copied in a given context or by a given scribe? If so, it would facilitate better characterization of the differences between monastic and administrative contexts. Yet it turns out that the specific profile of the copyist has little to do with which text is copied. Without exception, monastic treatises and rules (nos. 2, 13, 269, 288, 304) were written by monks – and are also less likely to be signed than other sorts of documents. Otherwise, however, disparate centres of textual activity do not seem to have led to a segregation of the corpora that were transmitted. Scribes from the Byzantine legal and administrative system with titles such as *notarios* and *nomikos* copied legal texts on occasion (nos. 50, 181, 211), but more frequently reproduced biblical commentaries, scripture, hagiography, or liturgical texts. The monk who used the title *logothetēs* copied the Gospels (no. 245). The church reader identified as *chronographos* copied the Septuagint (no. 98). Scribal practice also appears to remain consistent. Colophons take much the same form, regardless of the context in which they were produced. Perhaps the sole exception is monks' prevailing habit of professing humility, sinfulness, and worthlessness, something marginally less common in chancellery contexts, or even in non-monastic ecclesiastical ones.

Further, our corpus suggests that pagan classical texts were not confined to either *locus*, although they may have been more commonly copied outside the monasteries. Of the seven classical texts for which the colophon provides information about scribe and location, only two were definitely copied in a monastic context. Ephraim, a monk whom we have already encountered, copied both the Gospels (no. 86) and Aristotle (no. 44). Theodoros, who identifies himself only as *hyperamartōlos kai* [lacunose] *notarios* copied a manuscript of Isocrates (no. 293) in the *monē tou hagiou methodiou*. Unfortunately a crucial bit of the colophon is missing, but Theodoros was likely also a monk (as indeed suggested by the typically humble profession of sinfulness). Other copyists were ecclesiastics, but seem to have worked for private hire. Stephanos, a *klērikos* in the Peloponnesian city of Patrai, produced a copy of Euclid (no. 51) for the sum of 14 *nomismata*. The *hypodiakonos* Gregorios produced a copy of Porphyry (no. 333) for a fellow deacon. The price has worn away, but the word *nomismata* remains. Nothing suggests that either was connected to a monastery, and the implication of private contract-hire in the listed prices militates against the possibility. A different Gregorios copied Plutarch (no. 368). Since he identifies himself as *koubouklēsios* to a bishop, the urban context of an episcopal staff is most likely. Finally, two copyists used only basic scribal titles: Ioannes the *grammateus* (Alcinus, no. 204) and Ioannes the *kalligraphos* (Plato, no. 52).

This brief survey finds that pagan classical texts were copied in monastic, episcopal, and professional contexts. Given the overall preponderance of monastic manuscripts – more than two-thirds of our entire corpus – it is notable that monasteries produced fewer classical texts than other sources, but the limited data support only tentative conclusions.

5 Conclusion

Based on the colophons of Byzantine manuscripts, this prosopographical analysis concludes that scribal copying centred on two distinct *loci*. While monasteries provided the most common setting for manuscript transmission, the urban settings of episcopal and imperial administration formed a second, significant focal point. While individual scribes occupied one sphere or the other, with remarkably little overlap demonstrable, the monastic and administrative spheres shared a common ecclesiastical context, which may be the reason that the division of scribal contexts did not result in a significant segregation of the textual field itself. With few exceptions, both settings for scribal activity transmitted the same sorts of texts and employed the same conventions, including colophons themselves. While the limitations of evidence and the serendipity of manuscript preservation require methodological caution, these conclusions contradict established wisdom and demand further scholarly attention to the social settings of textual transmission in the Byzantine world.

Appendix 1: Scribal Titles from Byzantine Manuscript Colophons by Frequency

The number after the title refers to the number of colophons in which it occurs.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| – μοναχός – 83 | – μοναχὸς ἱερεὺς – 5 |
| – μοναχὸς πρεσβύτερος – 23 | – ἀναγνώστης – 4 |
| – πρεσβύτερος – 20 | – διάκονος – 4 |
| – νοτάριος – 9 | – ἄββᾶς – 2 |
| – ἱερεὺς – 7 | – ἀναγνώστης καλλιγράφος – 2 |
| – ἱερομονάζων – 5 | – ἀναγνώστης μοναχός – 2 |
| – ἱερομόναχος – 5 | – γραμματικός – 2 |
| – καλλιγράφος – 5 | – μοναχὸς γέρων – 2 |
| – κληρικός – 5 | – μοναχὸς ἡγούμενος – 2 |

—	ἀναγνώστης θεολόγος — 1	—	νοτάριος καλλιγράφος — 1
—	ἀναγνώστης χρονογράφος — 1	—	παπάς — 1
—	ἀρχιδιάκονος — 1	—	πατρίκιος — 1
—	γραφεύς — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος δευτεροψάλτης — 1
—	γραφεύς ἀναγνώστης — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος ἡγούμενος — 1
—	ἡγούμενος — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος ἡγούμενος καλλιγράφος — 1
—	ἱερεὺς σύγκελλος — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος καλλιγράφος — 1
—	κληρικός ἀναγνώστης — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος μοναχός — 1
—	κουβουκλήσιος — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος νομικός — 1
—	μονάζων — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος νοτάριος — 1
—	μοναχὸς ἐκκλησίαρχος — 1	—	πρεσβύτερος ψάλτης — 1
—	μοναχὸς καθηγούμενος — 1	—	πρωτοκαλλιγράφος — 1
—	μοναχὸς καθηγούμενος	—	πρωτονοτάριος — 1
	ἀρχιμανδρίτης — 1	—	πρωτόπαπας — 1
—	μοναχὸς λογοθέτης — 1	—	πρωτοσπαθάριος — 1
—	μοναχὸς νοτάριος — 1	—	ταβουλάριος — 1
—	μοναχὸς πρεσβύτερος βιβλιογράφος — 1	—	ὑποδιάκονος — 1
—	νομικός — 1	—	φύλαξ πρεσβύτερος — 1
—	νοτάριος καθηγούμενος — 1		

**Appendix 2: Scribal Titles from Byzantine Manuscript Colophons
by Category**

The number after the title refers to the number of colophons in which it occurs. Titles in this section occur in more than one list and are ordered alphabetically within each category.

1 Monastic Titles (139)

—	ἄββᾶς πρεσβύτερος — 2	—	μοναχὸς καθηγούμενος — 1
—	ἀναγνώστης μοναχός — 2	—	μοναχὸς καθηγούμενος ἀρχιμανδρίτης — 1
—	ἱερομονάζων — 5	—	μοναχὸς λογοθέτης — 1
—	ἱερομόναχος — 5	—	μοναχὸς νοτάριος — 1
—	μονάζων — 1	—	μοναχὸς πρεσβύτερος — 23
—	μοναχός — 83	—	μοναχὸς πρεσβύτερος βιβλιογράφος — 1

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| — μοναχὸς γέρων — 2 | — παπᾶς — 1 |
| — μοναχὸς ἐκκλησίαρχος — 1 | — πρεσβύτερος μοναχὸς — 1 |
| — μοναχὸς ἡγούμενος — 2 | — πρωτόπαπας — 1 |
| — μοναχὸς ἱερεὺς — 5 | |

Scribes in Monasteries but Not Using Monastic Titles (21)

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| — ἀναγνώστης καλλιγράφος — 1 | — νοτάριος — 2 |
| — διάκονος — 2 | — πρεσβύτερος — 5 |
| — ἡγούμενος — 1 | — πρεσβύτερος δευτεροψάλτης — 1 |
| — γραφεὺς ἀναγνώστης — 1 | — πρεσβύτερος ἡγούμενος — 1 |
| — ἱερεὺς — 3 | — πρεσβύτερος ἡγούμενος καλλιγράφος — 1 |
| — κληρικός — 3 | |

2 Ecclesiastical Titles (108)

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| — ἄββᾶς πρεσβύτερος — 2 | — μοναχὸς ἡγούμενος — 2 |
| — ἀναγνώστης — 4 | — μοναχὸς ἱερεὺς — 5 |
| — ἀναγνώστης θεολόγος — 1 | — μοναχὸς καθηγούμενος — 1 |
| — ἀναγνώστης καλλιγράφος — 2 | — μοναχὸς καθηγούμενος ἀρχιμανδρίτης — 1 |
| — ἀναγνώστης μοναχὸς — 2 | — μοναχὸς πρεσβύτερος — 23 |
| — ἀναγνώστης χρονογράφος — 1 | — μοναχὸς πρεσβύτερος βιβλιογράφος — 1 |
| — ἀρχιδιάκονος — 1 | — νοτάριος καθηγούμενος — 1 |
| — γραφεὺς ἀναγνώστης — 1 | — πρεσβύτερος — 19 |
| — διάκονος — 4 | — πρεσβύτερος δευτεροψάλτης — 1 |
| — ἡγούμενος — 1 | — πρεσβύτερος ἡγούμενος — 1 |
| — ἱερεὺς — 7 | — πρεσβύτερος ἡγούμενος καλλιγράφος — 1 |
| — ἱερεὺς σύγκελλος — 1 | — πρεσβύτερος καλλιγράφος — 1 |
| — ἱερομονάζων — 5 | — πρεσβύτερος μοναχὸς — 1 |
| — ἱερομοναχὸς — 5 | — πρεσβύτερος νομικός — 1 |
| — κληρικός — 5 | — πρεσβύτερος νοτάριος — 1 |
| — κληρικός ἀναγνώστης — 1 | — πρεσβύτερος ψάλτης — 1 |
| — κουβουκλήσιος — 1 | — ὑποδιάκονος — 1 |
| — μοναχὸς ἐκκλησίαρχος — 1 | — φύλαξ πρεσβύτερος — 1 |

3 Professional Titles (36)

- ανάγνωσης καλλιγράφος – 2
- ανάγνωσης χρονογράφος – 1
- γραμματικός – 2
- γραφεύς – 1
- γραφεύς ανάγνωσης – 1
- καλλιγράφος – 5
- μοναχός λογοθέτης – 1
- μοναχός νοτάριος – 1
- μοναχός πρεσβύτερος βιβλιογράφος – 1
- νομικός – 1
- νοτάριος – 9

Sayings Attributed to Emperors of Old and New Rome in Michael Psellos' *Historia Syntomos*

*Theofili Kampianaki**

Ἱστορία σύντομος τῶν παρὰ τῇ πρεσβυτέρᾳ Ῥώμῃ βασιλευσάντων καὶ αὖθις
τῇ νεωτέρᾳ [...]

This is a brief history of those who reigned in Elder Rome and later in the
Younger [...]

Thus begins the work of Michael Psellos known as the *Historia Syntomos* (henceforth *HS*), a chronicle recalling memories of ancient Rome within the context of eleventh-century Constantinople. The text consists of 106 chapters of unequal length, starting with the story of Rome's mythical foundation by Romulus and reaching up to the reign of the emperor Basileios II (r. 976–1025).¹

* I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Marc Lauxtermann, for drawing my attention to the gnomological material in the *Historia Syntomos*, and for always providing me with invaluable comments and suggestions on my work. Many thanks are also owed to Professor Elizabeth Jeffreys and Dr Ida Toth, who thoroughly read the manuscript and suggested significant improvements on it. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the A. G. Leventis Foundation and the Alexander Onassis Foundation, whose generous support has greatly assisted me during my studies at Oxford.

1 Rome's foundation by Romulus is an uncommon starting point for the narration of the Roman history. Byzantine chroniclers would begin with the creation of the world and reach up to their own time. The *HS* is not the only text of the period that deals with ancient Rome though. Previous scholarship has identified a revival of interest in Roman antiquities during the eleventh and twelfth centuries: see Athanasios Markopoulos, "Roman Antiquarianism: Aspects of the Roman Past in the Middle Byzantine Period (9th–11th cent.)," in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies, London 2006*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, Fiona K. Haarer, and Judith Gilliland, 3 vols (Aldershot, 2006), 1:277–297; Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, "The Fourth Kingdom and the Rhetoric of Hellenism," in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Paul Magdalino (London, 1992), pp. 117–156; Paul Magdalino, "Aspects of Twelfth-Century Byzantine Kaiserkritik," *Speculum* 58 (1983), 326–346, esp. 343–344.

Almost every chapter is dedicated to the reign of an emperor.² Although the work provides some basic information on the history of the Roman Empire, it mainly concentrates on the emperors' characters, constructing them as either good or bad.

The *Chronographia* is without doubt Psellos' best-known and most discussed historiographical work. In comparison the *HS* has received limited scholarly attention. Although the *codex unicus* containing the text, the fourteenth-century *Sinaiticus gr.* 1117, was already described in 1911 by Vladimir N. Benešević,³ it was only in the course of the 1970s that the chronicle came to scholarly attention through the work of the American scholar Kenneth Snipes.⁴ The *editio princeps* of the work was completed much later, in 1990, by Willem Aerts.⁵ A major focus for discussion among scholars who have dealt with the *HS* so far has been the authorship of the work. Aerts has questioned whether the text was indeed written by Psellos.⁶ However, later articles by J. Jakob Ljubarskij and,⁷ more recently, by John Duffy and Stratis

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- 2 Ioannes Tzimiskes is the only emperor whose reign is not recounted. Apostolos Karpozilos postulates that the leaf of the manuscript in which Tzimiskes' reign was included must have been lost to the scribe of the Sinai manuscript: Apostolos Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι* [*Byzantine Historians and Chronographers*], 3 vols (Athens, 2009), 3:179.
 - 3 Vladimir N. Benešević, *Opisanie grečeskich rukopisej monastyreja Sv. Ekateriny na Sinae* [*Description of the Greek Manuscripts in the Monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai*], 2 vols (St. Petersburg, 1911), 1:266–279. The *HS* is found in folios 265^r–276^v of the Sinai manuscript and is followed by a passage of Psellos' *Chronographia*: Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, ed. Diether Reinsch (Berlin, 2014), 7.154–7.181 (henceforth *Chronographia*).
 - 4 In 1977 Kenneth Snipes presented a paper on the *HS* at the Third Annual Byzantine Conference in New York. A summary of the paper, entitled "A Newly Discovered Historical Work of Michael Psellos", is included in the abstracts of the conference that can be found at http://www.bsana.net/conference/archives/1977/abstracts_1977.html (accessed on 18 June 2014). He later published his article "A Newly Discovered History of the Roman Emperors by Michael Psellos," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32 (1982), 53–65.
 - 5 Michael Psellos, *Historia syntomos (HS)*, ed. Willem Aerts (Berlin, 1990).
 - 6 Aerts suggests that the *HS* could have been written either by a certain Σικελιώτης διδάσκαλος that John Skylitzes mentions in the proem of his own history or by John Italos: Michael Psellos, *HS* pp. ix–xvi (introduction). Reviewing the edition of the text, Diether Reinsch agreed with Aerts on the matter: see Diether Reinsch, Review of *Michaelis Pselli Historia Syntomos* by Willem Aerts, *Ellinika* 41 (1990), 425–429. Snipes, by contrast, believed that Psellos was the author of the work: Snipes, "History of the Roman Emperors," p. 55.
 - 7 Jakob Ljubarskij, "Some Notes on the Newly Discovered Historical Work by Psellos," in *To Hellenikon: Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr.*, ed. Jelisaveta S. Allen and John Springer Langdon (New Rochelle and New York, 1993), pp. 213–228.

Papaioannou have convincingly shown that the chronicle is an original Psellan work.⁸

Leaving this matter aside, much remains to be done in examining other aspects of the *HS*. One notable feature, which is the topic of the present paper, is the remarkable number of imperial sayings found in the text. One can count seventy-nine sayings attributed to Roman emperors in Psellos' chronicle. The origin of these sayings has been frequently examined by modern commentators of the *HS*, who have assumed that the sayings were either composed by Psellos himself or drawn from one or more external source. Snipes was the first to raise the possibility that the sayings of the *HS* had been written by Psellos.⁹ In a study which deals exclusively with the presence of sayings in the chronicle – Dejan Dželebdžić has arrived at a similar conclusion.¹⁰ Aerts, by contrast, has suggested that the author had at least one relevant source at his disposal, a collection of sayings of emperors.¹¹ However, he has not offered substantial evidence in support of his hypothesis. The most recent contribution to the discussion about the sayings of the *HS* comes from Raimondo Tocci, who focuses his attention, nonetheless, not so much on the origins of the sayings as on their use as an authorial act on Psellos' part.¹² The main purpose of my paper is to re-examine the issue of the source of the sayings contained in the *HS* and to explain why it is highly likely that a collection of sayings attributed to emperors was indeed available to Psellos.

Let us begin with the observation that the imperial sayings can be found only in the central section of the *HS*, from chapter 48, the reign of Claudius II (r. 268–270 AD), to chapter 85, the reign of Phillipikos Bardanes (r. 711–713 AD). Their distribution, however, is not even throughout this part of the work. Six sayings are attributed to the emperors Tiberios II (ch. 73) and Justinian II (ch. 81), five to the emperors Phokas (ch. 75), Maurikios (ch. 74) and Leontios

8 Duffy and Papaioannou provided linguistic evidence to prove that Psellos was the author of the *HS*: John Duffy and Stratis Papaioannou, "Michael Psellos and the Authorship of *Historia Syntomos*: Final Considerations," in *Byzantium: State and Society*, ed. Anna Avramea, Angeliki E. Laiou, Euangelos Chrysos, and Nicolas Oikonomides (Athens, 2003), pp. 219–229.

9 Snipes, "History of the Roman Emperors," p. 55.

10 Dejan Dželebdžić, "Izreke careva u Kratkoj istoriji Mihaila Psela," *Zbornik radova Vizantoloskog instituta* 44 (2007), 155–173 (the main text is in Greek, preceded by a short summary in English).

11 Michael Psellos, *HS*, p. x (introduction) and p. 127.

12 Raimondo Tocci, "Questions of Authorship and Genre in Chronicles of the Middle Byzantine Period: The Case of Michael Psellos' *Historia Syntomos*," in *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature*, ed. Aglae Pizzzone (Berlin and Boston, 2014), pp. 61–75.

(ch. 82), and four to Justinian I (ch. 71), Ioustinos II (ch. 72), Herakleios (ch. 76), Konstas II (ch. 79) and Philippikos. Most emperors, though, have only one or two sayings attributed to their name. It should also be noted that there are six emperors without any saying ascribed to them, namely the emperors Diocletian (ch. 54), Zenon (ch. 68), Ioustinos I (ch. 70), Konstantinos III (ch. 77), Heraklonas (ch. 78) and Tiberios II (ch. 83).

The majority of the sayings in Psellos' chronicle are around two or three lines in length. The author introduces them in his narrative in direct or indirect speech. Some of them are presented within a very simple narrative framework. To take an example, concerning Ioustinos II, Psellos tells us that: "this emperor would say that an emperor may be forgiven if he makes a mistake about a certain thing, but if he repeats the same mistake, he cannot be forgiven" ("ἔλεγεν ὁ βασιλεὺς οὗτος, ὅτι 'συγγνωστός ὁ βασιλεὺς σφαλεῖς ἐπὶ τινὶ πράγματι, εἰ δ' ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ αὖθις σφαλείη, ἀσύγνωστος").¹³ One can also find imperial sayings within a more elaborate and detailed narrative framework. For instance, according to Psellos:¹⁴

The divine Constantine [the Great] hated dishonesty so much that many times he would say from the imperial tribune that an emperor should not show mercy to anyone as far as public affairs are concerned, not even to members of his own family.

ὁ δέ γε θεῖος Κωνσταντῖνος οὕτως ἦν μισοπόνηρος, ὥς πολλάκις ἐπὶ τοῦ βασιλείου βήματος ἀποφθέγγεσθαι μὴ δεῖν φεῖδεσθαι τὸν βασιλέα ἔνεκα τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων καταστάσεως μηδενὸς τῶν πάντων, ἀλλὰ μὴν μηδὲ τῶν οἰκείων μελῶν.

There appears to be a tendency on Psellos' part to report a saying, or a set of sayings, towards the very end of his description of an emperor's reign. This being said, he does occasionally introduce sayings somewhere in the middle or even at the beginning of a chapter. A notable example of this are the sayings of Maurikios, which are recorded at the very beginning of chapter 74 that is dedicated to his reign.

Examining the content of Psellos' sayings in the *HS*, three groups of sayings may be loosely identified. The first group constitutes ethical maxims, items of a generic meaning that may apply to all people. They are concerned with several aspects of human existence and cover a wide variety of subjects. A saying

¹³ Michael Psellos, *HS*, 72.22–23. All translations are my own.

¹⁴ Michael Psellos, *HS*, 55.50–53.

attributed to Constantine the Great, for instance, relates to those who show repentance:¹⁵

Showing kindness to those who were wicked but changed their attitudes, he used to say that ‘a sick man should cut the diseased part (of his body), not the one that is healthy’.

Πρὸς δὲ τοὺς πονηρευσαμένους εἶτα μεταβαλλομένους φιλανθρωπευόμενος εἰώθει λέγειν, ὅτι ‘τὸ νοσοῦν μέλος ἀποκοπτέον τῷ ἀρρωστοῦντι, οὐ μὴν τὸ ὑγείας τετυχηκός’.

In Psellos’ account of Ioustinianos II we find a saying that refers to the manner in which children should treat their parents under certain circumstances:¹⁶ “Ὁ αὐτὸς ἰδὼν τινα φειδόμενον ἀδικούσης τῆς μητρὸς οὐκ ἔφησε δεῖν ἐπίπροσθεν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄγειν τοὺς γονέας” (“Witnessing someone sparing his mother who made a mistake, the same emperor said that one should not put his parents above justice”). Another saying attributed to Ioustinianos II exemplifies the theme of changing fortune: “μετὰ νέφος ὁ ἥλιος” (“the sun comes after clouds”).¹⁷ The second category of sayings are those – only six in number – that have to do with the ‘scientific’ areas of astronomy, philosophy, arithmetic and interpretation of dreams. The emperor Arkadios, for example, is quoted saying that: “κορυφὴ πάντων μαθημάτων ὁ ἀριθμὸς” (“arithmetic is the summit of all sciences”).¹⁸ We also learn that Konstas II used to say that: “τὰ ὀνείρατα ἀπορρήτων εἶναι μυστήρια” (“dreams are mysteries of the ineffable”).¹⁹ The third – and most extensive – group of sayings in the *HS* contains parainetic maxims that are addressed specifically to a person holding the imperial office. They are short pieces of advice as to how an emperor should or should not behave on certain occasions and what kind of qualities he should possess. Such sayings are almost always introduced with the formula “οὗτος ἔλεγε/ἔφη τὸν βασιλέα δεῖν...” (“he [a certain emperor] would say that an emperor should...”) or a close variation of this. Thus, they clearly express obligation on the part of an emperor. To provide a few examples, Psellos records the following saying attributed to the emperor Marcianus: “Τοῦτον δὲ τὸν λόγον ἐπιχειλῇ

15 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 55.53–55.

16 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 81.80–81.

17 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 81.89–90.

18 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 63.51.

19 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 79.33. The other four sayings of such content are attributed to the emperors Julian (chapter 57), Herakleios (2 sayings) and Constantine IV (chapter 80).

εἶχεν αἰεὶ μὴ δεῖν βασιλέα, ἕως ἔξεστι, πολεμεῖν, ἀλλ' εἰρηνεύειν αἰεὶ" ("He would always have these words on his lips: 'as long as it is possible, an emperor should not proceed to war, but should always maintain peace'").²⁰ Here is what we read in the chapter dedicated to Ioustinos II:²¹

Ὁ αὐτὸς ἔλεγε δεῖν τὸν βασιλέα μὴ ἐπὶ τοῖς θριάμβοις, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τρόποις λαμπρύνεσθαι, μηδὲ ἐπὶ ταῖς τιμωρίαις, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ ταῖς εὐεργεσίαις τὴν βασιλικὴν δύναμιν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι.

The same emperor used to say that an emperor should not distinguish himself by triumphs, but by good manners, neither should he demonstrate imperial power by punishments, but by benefactions.

In his narrative of Leontios, the author tells his readers that: "ὁ αὐτὸς ἔλεγε μὴ δεῖν κοσμεῖσθαι τὸν βασιλέα λίθοις καὶ χρυσῷ καὶ ὑφάσμασιν, ἀλλὰ βέλεσι καὶ τόξοις καὶ δόρασιν" ("the same emperor would say that an emperor should not be adorned with jewels, gold and garments, but with arrows, bows and spears").²²

In light of these observations, one can now turn to the source of the sayings that the writer inserts in his text. With a few exceptions – some being present in the chronicles of Theophanes, Symeon the Logothete and Ioannes Zonaras – the sayings contained in the *HS* are not found in any other extant Byzantine work.²³ As Dželebdžić has pointed out, however, the sayings that appear in Zonaras seem to have been taken directly from the *HS*, which was one of the sources used by the chronicler for the composition of his work.²⁴ The fact that essentially the sayings are not attested in sources earlier than *HS* is one of the main reasons why, according to Dželebdžić, one must assume that they had been created by Psellos. The scholar postulates that Psellos would derive material from his sources, such as Symeon the Logothete, and use it to compose his sayings.²⁵ Is this enough reason, however, to conclude that a collection of sayings is unlikely to have been available to the writer?

There has been a considerable upsurge of interest in Byzantine compilation literature during the last few decades. Marcel Richard's illuminating article

20 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 65.89–90.

21 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 72.32–34.

22 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 82.17–18.

23 Psellos, *HS* p. xxiv (introduction); Dželebdžić, "Izreke careva," pp. 161–162

24 See Dželebdžić, "Izreke careva," pp. 157–160. For the relation between the *HS* and Zonaras' chronicle in general, see Karpuzilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι*, pp. 162–169.

25 Dželebdžić, "Izreke careva," pp. 160–161, and at footnote 27.

“Florilèges spirituels Grecs” sheds much light on the distinction between dogmatic and spiritual florilegia.²⁶ Richard defines the former as collections of excerpts from dogmatic and patristic texts, and the latter as collections of mainly a moral and ascetic character. He divides spiritual florilegia into three categories: the damascenes, the sacro-profane, and the monastic. More recently, scholars such as Alexander Alexakis,²⁷ Paolo Odorico, and Dennis Searby,²⁸ have investigated and discussed extensively the compilation of gnomologies. Charlotte Roueché and Searby have also launched the website *Sharing Ancient Wisdoms* (SAWS), which deals with gnomological material in both Greek and Arabic.²⁹

Gnomologies were a popular genre, produced, copied and transmitted from Late Antiquity to the end of the Byzantine era. A number of gnomologies are also attested for the second half of the eleventh century, the period during which Psellos lived and composed his works.³⁰ More importantly, many texts in the eleventh and twelfth centuries relied heavily upon gnomologies. Roueché’s articles show that Kekaumenos had access to numerous collections of sayings when he composed his *Strategikon*.³¹ Roueché attributes Kekaumenos’ interest

26 Marcel Richard, “Florilèges spirituels grecs,” *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* 5 (1964), 475–499. The term florilegium is used to denote a collection of quotations of one or more authors, which are predominantly of a Christian character. However, the distinction between a florilegium and a gnomology is narrow and therefore many scholars use these terms interchangeably: see Elizabeth Jeffreys and Alexander Kazhdan, “Florilegium,” *Oxford Dictionary Of Byzantium Vol 2*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan et al. (Oxford, 1991), pp. 793–794.

27 Alexander Alexakis has thoroughly examined dogmatic florilegia in his work *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1115 and its Archetype* (Washington, D.C., 1996), and in his study “Some Remarks on Dogmatic Florilegia Based Mainly on the Florilegia of the Early Ninth Century,” in *Encyclopedic Trends in Byzantium? Proceedings of the International Conference Held in Leuven, 6–8 May 2009*, ed. Peter van Deun and Caroline Macé (Leuven, 2011), pp. 45–55.

28 Paolo Odorico, *Il Prato e l’ape: il sapere sentenzioso del monaco Giovanni* (Vienna, 1986); idem, “La cultura della Sullogh: 1. Il cosiddetto enciclopedismo Bizantino. 2. Le tavole del sapere di Giovanni Damasceno,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 83 (1990), 1–20; Dennis Searby, *Aristotle in the Greek Gnomological Tradition* (Uppsala, 1998), in which there are some useful introductory remarks on Greek gnomologies and references to previous literature in pp. 28–42. See also *The Corpus Parisinum: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text with Commentary and English Translation*, ed. and trans. Dennis Searby (Lewiston, 2007).

29 See <http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/>, accessed on 18 June 2014.

30 Ioannes Oxeites (ca. 1089–1100), for instance, patriarch of Antioch, was the compiler of two collections, the *Tractatus de Eucharistia* and the *Eclogae Asceticae*.

31 Charlotte Roueché, “The Literary Background of Kekaumenos,” in *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Catherine Holmes and Judith Waring (Leiden, 2002), pp. 111–138; eadem, “The Rhetoric of Kekaumenos,” in *Rhetoric*

in gnomologies to a general development of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when sayings were being used as parts of broader narrative frameworks.³² The use of gnomological material can also be seen in the *Dioptra* of Philippos Monotropos,³³ *Digenēs Akritēs*,³⁴ the *Mousai* attributed to Alexios I Komnenos,³⁵ the twelfth-century version of the admonitory poem *Spaneas*, and the *Life of Cyril Phileotes* of Nikolaos Kataskepenos.³⁶ In other words, from the eleventh century onwards gnomologies started to be used in a new way by writers: they would draw upon gnomologies and insert this material in their own extensive compositions. These considerations may suggest that, just as his contemporaries, Psellos too could have incorporated in his work gnomological material he had taken from an external source.

To support this idea, one may point out Psellos' remark in his account of the emperor Konstantinos III (ca.612–641), the first-born son of Herakleios who died at the age of twenty nine. He notes that: “περὶ μὲν Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ βασιλέως οὐδὲν ἀπόφθεγμα φέρεται· ὀλίγον γὰρ βιώσας ἐτεθνήκει” (“no saying is transmitted about the emperor Konstantinos; for he died after a brief life”).³⁷ From this statement, Psellos gives his readers the impression that he had access to a source from which he derived imperial sayings, and incorporated them in his own narrative. Here, he explains the reason why no sayings of Konstantinos are included in his source: because he died at a young age. Elsewhere, too, we

in *Byzantium: Papers from the Thirty-Fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 23–37. See also <http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/kekaumenos-sources/#>, accessed on 18 June 2014.

32 Roueché, “Literary Background,” pp. 116–117.

33 Philippos Monotropos, *Dioptra*, ed. Spyridon Lavriotes, Ὁ Ἀθωσ 1/1 (Athens, 1920), pp. 1–247; Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb, “Language and Style of the *Dioptra*,” *Byzantinoslavica* 1–2 (2012), 113–130.

34 Paolo Odorico, “La sapienza del Digenis: materiali per lo studio dei *Loci Similes* nella recensione di Grottaferrata,” *Byzantion* 59 (1989), 137–146.

35 *Mousai*, ed. Paul Maas, “Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 22 (Jan., 1913), 348–369; Margaret Mullett, “Whose Muses? Two Admonitory Poems Attributed to Alexios I Komnenos,” in *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine: le texte en tant que message immediate*, ed. Paolo Odorico (Paris, 2012), pp. 195–220.

36 Georg Danezis, *Spaneas: Vorlage, Quellen, Versionen* (Munich, 1987); *La vie de saint Cyrille le Philéote* ed. Étienne Sargologos (Brussels, 1964); Margaret Mullett, “Food for the Spirit and a Light for the Road: Reading the Bible in the *Life of Cyril Phileotes* by Nicholas Kataskepenos,” in *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission*, ed. Holmes, Waring, pp. 139–164.

37 Michael Psellos, *HS*, 77.93–94.

can see that Psellos uses the verb φέρεται to denote that something becomes known from hearsay or from a written source.³⁸

Most notable in this regard is the fact that the imperial sayings can only be found in a certain section of the *HS*, not throughout the text. This cannot be explained by the hypothesis that the sayings incorporated in the chronicle were created by Psellos. One cannot but wonder why Psellos would invent a great number of sayings for the emperors from Claudius II to Philippikos, and only one or two for those who reigned earlier or later than them,³⁹ all the way to late tenth century. It seems more reasonable that, if Psellos had been interested in embedding in the *HS* a series of sayings he had written himself, he would have applied this practice throughout his text. This fact further invites the possibility that the author had access to a series of sayings connected to particular historical figures. To put it differently, Psellos must have had at his disposal a collection of sayings attributed to specific emperors, that contained sayings transmitted under the names of emperors who reigned from the second half of the third to the early eighth century.

In various gnomologies that have come down to us, sayings are usually organised and presented in three ways, the first being alphabetical order by the initial letter of each saying. The late ninth-century and early tenth-century *Gnomologium* of Ioannes Georgides, for instance, is structured in such a way.⁴⁰ Sayings can also be organised thematically under relevant titles, as we find in the extensive fifth-century *Anthology* of Ioannes Stobaeus, which includes extracts from secular writers.⁴¹ Finally, in some cases sayings are grouped according to the author or the source of the saying; for instance, according to the ruler, philosopher, or orator to whom they are attributed, or according

38 Michael Psellos, *Λόγος κβ'.* Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ἀκολουθήσατε αὐτῷ καὶ τῷ οἰκοδεσπότῃ εἶπατε, in *Michaelis Pselli theologica Vol. 1*, ed. Paul Gautier (Leipzig, 1989), 1.12–13: “φέρεται γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο ἐν ταῖς ἀγράφοις περὶ ὧν ἐθαυματούργησε πίστεσι”; Michael Psellos, *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐπιτάφιος εἰς τὸν μακαριώτατον πατριάρχην κύρ Ἰωάννην τὸν Εἰφιλῖνον*, in *Michael Psellus Orationes Funebres*, ed. Ioannis Polemis (Berlin, 2014), 15.39: “Φέρεται δὲ ὁ λόγος καὶ εἰς ὧτα τῷ βασιλεῖ...”

39 A saying is attributed to the emperor Titus. As Aerts demonstrates, however, the saying was well-known among Byzantine writers: Michael Psellos, *HS*, 26.88–89 and pp. 119–120. We can also find a saying to the chapter about the emperor Nikephoros Phokas: Michael Psellos, *HS*, 92.82–84 and p. 155. A few words are also attributed to the emperor Romanos II: Michael Psellos, *HS*, 103.34–35.

40 The *Gnomologium* of Ioannes Georgides has been edited by Paolo Odorico in *Prato e l'ape*, pp. 119–255. For the dating of the text, see pp. 12–15, particularly at pp. 18–22.

41 Ioannes Stobaeus, *Anthologium*, ed. Otto Hense and Curt Wachsmuth, 5 vols (Berlin, 1884–1912).

to the book from which they derive. This is the case with the two largest sections of the extensive *Corpus Parisinum* (*CP*), the most important collection that follows this way of arrangement.⁴²

The *CP* is a sacro-profane collection, which contains gnomes and sayings attributed to both pagan and Christian figures. Interestingly, the Christian and secular sayings of the *CP* are presented in separate sections, which suggests that the *CP* was a compilation of several individual gnomologies.⁴³ Its third section is an exclusively secular gnomology arranged according to the attributed author. Searby, the editor of the *CP*, calls this section the *Florilegium Profanum*. The items of the *Florilegium Profanum* are grouped under headings that indicate the authors and the types of utterances attributed to them, as, for example, “Γνῶμαι Δημοκρίτου” (“Gnomes of Democritus”), “Γνῶμαι Ἀριστίππου” (“Gnomes of Aristippus”) and shortly after “Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀποφθέγματα” (“Sayings of the same Aristippus”) etc. It is worthy of note that we also find the name of a ruler here, the Persian Cyrus, to whom a series of sayings are attributed. They have the title “Κύρου ἀποφθέγματα” (“Sayings of Cyrus”). It is difficult to determine when the *CP* was compiled, but Odorico and Searby have proposed the early ninth century as a probable date.⁴⁴ Odorico’s analysis of the *CP* has also shown that among the new elements characterising this work is the absence of long excerpts. The majority of sayings included in this collection do not exceed three lines in length.⁴⁵

These remarks may give some textual indications that a gnomology underpins the *HS*. As already mentioned, Psellos occasionally attributes a series of sayings to certain emperors. These appear right after one another in the form of a list. Noteworthy in this case is the fact that each list is introduced with a title similar to the ones we find in gnomologies that are arranged according to authors. We read, for example, “Ἀποφθέγματα Ἰουστινιανού” (“Sayings of Ioustinianos”), “Ἀποφθέγματα Τιβερίου” (“Sayings of Tiberios”), “Ἀποφθέγματα Μαυρικίου” (“Sayings of Maurikios”) etc. It seems likely that these titles are

42 *Corpus Parisinum*, ed. Searby. The overall complex authorial, thematic and alphabetical arrangement of the *CP* has been analysed by Jens Gerlach in his study “Der gedankenlose Excerptor? Anmerkungen zur Praxis byzantinischen Gnomologen und ihrer philologischen Erfassung,” in *Selecta Colligere*, ed. Rosa Maria Piccione and Matthias Perkams, 2 vols (Alessandria, 2003), 1:69–93.

43 In Searby’s words, the *CP* is “a collection of collections”: see Searby, *Aristotle*, p. 56.

44 Odorico, *Prato e l’ape*, pp. 3–11. Initially Searby believed that the *CP* was compiled in the ninth or the tenth century during the heyday of Byzantine encyclopaedism: Searby, *Aristotle*, pp. 55–59. Later, though, introducing his edition of the gnomology, he suggested that the *CP* was probably compiled in the ninth century: *Corpus Parisinum*, preface, p. ii.

45 Odorico, *Prato e l’ape*, pp. 3–11.

remnants of the gnomology Psellos had at his disposal. As in the *Florilegium Profanum*, the headings of the gnomology available to Psellos indicated the attributed author and the type of each quotation.

The hypothesis that the writer derived the sayings of the *HS* from a collection is further reinforced by the likelihood that collections of imperial sayings were used in the composition of the *Chronographia* as well. This is seen in Psellos' account of the emperor Basileios II, to whom the author attributes three witty sayings.⁴⁶ According to Linda Garland, it is plausible that such corpora of imperial sayings circulated in the palace during this period, and that one containing the witticisms of Basileios was available to the writer.⁴⁷ Psellos might also have had access to a collection of sayings attributed to Konstantinos X Doukas, with four sayings of the emperor recorded.⁴⁸ The writer handles this gnomological material in much the same manner as in the *HS*: he presents the sayings as he concludes his description of Konstantinos' reign, and introduces them in direct speech in a rather detailed narrative framework. It is important to stress that, as in his chronicle, Psellos does not record the sayings of any other emperor featured in the *Chronographia*. As Garland also highlights, despite speaking of the "clever responses" ("εὐφυεῖς ἀντιθέσεις") of Michael IV, Psellos does not mention specific sayings attributed to the emperor.⁴⁹

Of course, sayings concerning rulership had been in circulation in Byzantium for a long time. Chapters containing a series of maxims about emperors can be found, for instance, in the famous *Sacra Parallela*,⁵⁰ a florilegium of theological and ascetic items, and the so-called *Melissa Augustana*, a collection of theological as well as secular material.⁵¹ Some of the themes discussed there are

46 Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, 1.20.19–22, 1.27.10–11, 1.33.25–26,

47 Linda Garland, "Basil II as Humorist," *Byzantion* 69 (1999), 321–343, esp. 332–333. Garland highlights a part of the *Chronographia* in which Psellos relates that the emperor Isaac Komnenos would entertain his entourage "with stories of the old times, recalling all the witty sayings of Romanus's son, the emperor Basil the Great": *Chronographia*, 7.76.5–6; idem, "Imperial Women and Entertainment at the Middle Byzantine Court," in *Byzantine Women: Varieties of Experience, 800–1200*, ed. Linda Garland (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 177–191, esp. at p. 184.

48 Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, 7.a.29.

49 For this point, see Garland, "Basil," p. 334. See Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, 4.7.11–12.

50 John of Damascus, *Sacra Parallela*, ed. Michel Lequien, in *Patrologia Graeca* 95 (Paris, 1860), pp. 1040–1588. Chapters B.9–11 are entitled "Περὶ βασιλέως χρηστοῦ καὶ μισοπονήρου", "Περὶ βασιλέως μὴ λίαν θαυμαζομένου", and "Περὶ βασιλέως· ὅτι χρὴ εὐχεσθαι ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ" respectively.

51 Melissa Augustana. *Un traité de vie spirituelle et morale du XI^e siècle: le florilège sacro-profane du manuscrit 6 de Patmos: Introduction, texte critique, notes et tables*, ed. Étienne

similar to the ones treated in the gnomology at Psellos' disposal. For example, the manner in which a ruler speaks, or should speak, appears to have been a recurring and common subject in gnomological literature about rulers.⁵² It is not difficult to imagine that at a certain point a compiler might have taken it upon himself to collect and arrange such gnomological material according to authors. If this was so, then emperors would be the most likely candidates to whom he would attribute the sayings.

One question arising from this is the dating of the proposed gnomology that Psellos had at his disposal. Two suggestions can be put forward. Firstly, the gnomology could have been composed in the early decades of the eighth century. Its unknown compiler would then have incorporated in his work sayings of emperors from the second half of the third century up to his era. Alternatively, the compiler might have produced his work in the first half of the ninth century. In that case, he refrained from attributing sayings to the 'impious', iconoclast emperors of the eighth and ninth centuries. He also kept up with the early ninth-century trend attested in the *CP* towards short items of two or three lines in length.⁵³ This is not enough, though, to deduce that Psellos' collection was indeed a work of this period. Upon close inspection of the sayings, we may notice that 'bad' sayings are attributed to emperors who have gone down in history negatively. To take a characteristic example, all five sayings of the 'tyrant' Phokas present him in a negative light. One can therefore assume that, if the compiler lived in the first half of the ninth century, he would have applied a similar practice to the iconoclast emperors too.

It is worth noting, moreover, that the vast majority of sayings contained in the *HS* are secular.⁵⁴ This leaves us with two possible explanations: the collec-

Sargologos (Thessaloniki, 1990). The title of the chapter 29 is "Περὶ βασιλέως χρηστοῦ καὶ ἀχρήστου". See also http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/intro-kekaumenos/#index.xml-body.1_div.7, at section III, par. 2 (accessed on 18 June 2014).

52 See Michael Psellos, *HS*, 62.32.34, 64.74–77, 81.86–88, 85.65–67, 81.88, 85.65–67; John of Damascus, *Sacra Parallela*, p. 1289, lines 4, 12. For the theme of justice see Michael Psellos, *HS*, 59.42–47, 60.83–84; John of Damascus, *Sacra Parallela*, p. 1288, lines 40–44, 47–50, 51–52, and p. 1289, lines 3, 13–14.

53 For a different suggestion about the date when the gnomology available to Psellos could have been put together, see Michael Psellos, *HS*, p. xx. Here, Aerts argues that the gnomology might have been a product of the tenth-century Byzantine 'encyclopaedism'. This does not seem very likely to me; if that were the case, one would expect that the compiler would have included sayings attributed to emperors up to his own time.

54 The only exception is the saying ascribed to the emperor Valentinian (59.64–65): "He always used to say that 'one should not aid a man who fights god'" ("Εἰώθε δὲ λέγειν αἰεί

tion included both secular and theological sayings, as was commonly the case with such gnomologies, but Psellos opted to incorporate only the first in his work; or, alternatively, an exclusively secular collection was available to the author. The fact that the sayings of the gnomology were attributed to emperors makes the second case more likely. Since they were pronounced by rulers, they would probably not have dealt with theological issues, but with aspects of the imperial office and generic themes. The *Florilegium Profanum* provides evidence that collections of exclusively secular material were indeed compiled. In this case, the collection Psellos had at his disposal would have been a work with a secular character and a deep interest in history. At first sight, a text such as this may seem peculiar during a period of intense theological reflections and debates. Unfortunately, we know very little about the texts that were produced and circulated during the so-called 'Dark Ages', since there are scant samples of the total literary output of the period. Nevertheless, there is one known text of entirely secular character which shows an interest in the past. The text known as the *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai* is an anonymous work, loosely dated to the eighth or early ninth century, which describes both extant and ruined monuments in Constantinople.⁵⁵ It is an indication that secular works with a general historical scope could have been written during the iconoclast era.

As a final point, it is worth noting that the use of gnomological material by Psellos is closely connected to the individual purpose of the *HS*. His chronicle is different from any other Byzantine chronicle known to us, being distinctively educational in character. Indeed, its principal purpose is believed to have been didactic. The work was composed as a historical textbook which would present the image of the ideal ruler to a member of the imperial family, most likely the young emperor Michael VII Doukas, whom Psellos was

‘οὐ γὰρ ἐπαμύνειν ἀνδρὶ πολεμοῦντι θεῶ’”). This saying of Valentinian can be found in other sources too, some of which are earlier than the *HS*. See, for example, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. Léon Parmentier and Felix Scheidweiler, 2nd edn (Berlin, 1954), p. 270, 24–25, and Georgios Monachos, *Chronicon*, ed. Carl de Boor, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1904), 2: 552, 25. See also Aerts' comments in Michael Psellos, *HS*, p. 134–135.

55 *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: The Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, ed. Averil Cameron and Judith Herrin (Leiden, 1984); Gilbert Dagron, *Constantinople imaginaire: études sur le recueil des Patria* (Paris, 1984), pp. 29–49. It is difficult to date the text precisely. For the various dates that have been proposed, see Alexander Kazhdan, Lee Francis Sherry, and Christina Angelide, *A History of Byzantine Literature, 650–850* (Athens, 1999), pp. 308–313.

tutoring.⁵⁶ The author aimed to offer the young emperor imperial models for imitation, from his predecessors in both the elder Rome and the younger. For this reason, the *HS* has been characterised as a short ‘mirror of princes’, a *Fürstenspiegel*.⁵⁷ The gnomology available to Psellos, which contained ethical and parainetic sayings attributed to emperors, was certainly conducive to the didactic aim of the work.⁵⁸ Since the sayings of the gnomology were connected to emperors of both Rome and Constantinople, they fit well within a text that gave an outline of the history of the Roman Empire from its foundation. As is known from the *Chronographia*, moreover, Michael Doukas was very fond of sayings and gnomologies.⁵⁹ Thus, having taken the individual tastes of his disciple into account, Psellos would have inserted gnomological material in his work in order to attract the attention of the young emperor and concomitantly build up a more interesting and lively narrative.

To sum up, this paper has attempted to survey the series of sayings attributed to the emperors of Old and Young Rome, which appear at the central section of Michael Psellos’ *HS*. The sayings are inserted into the narrative either in direct or indirect speech, and are woven into a sometimes brief, sometimes more elaborate narrative framework. In terms of character, some are related to issues of a general nature, and a few to ‘scientific’ themes. The vast majority of the text’s sayings, however, concentrate on the conduct a ruler should exhibit, and the qualities he should possess.

The source of these sayings has occasioned some difference of opinion among previous scholars. There are strong indications, however, that Psellos had access to a collection of imperial sayings from which he drew material for the composition of his work. This process certainly fits into the broader literary context of the second half of the eleventh century, a period when authors began to incorporate gnomological material into more extensive literary compositions. Also, a close analysis of the *HS* may lead to the conclusion that the gnomology which Psellos accessed had been compiled with imperial reigns as the organising principle. This suggestion is confirmed by the titles *The Sayings*

56 For these observations, see Snipes, “History of the Roman Emperors,” p. 55–56; Ljubarskij, “Some Notes,” p. 214. For more information on Psellos’ works dedicated to Michael Doukas, see Michael Jeffreys, “The Nature and Origins of Political Verse,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974), 141–195; Floris Bernard, *Writing and Reading Secular Poetry* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 36–38, 127–128, 246.

57 Snipes, “History of the Roman Emperors,” p. 56; Ljubarskij, “Some Notes,” p. 219.

58 For the function of the sayings in relation to the educational character of the chronicle, see Tocci, “Questions of Authorship,” pp. 71–75.

59 Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, 7.168.3–4.

of... that we find in the chronicle and provides a plausible explanation as to why the sayings of the *HS* make their appearance only in the central part of the text. Moreover, it is proposed here that the gnomology available to Psellos covered the period from the second half of the third century up to the early eighth century. Its compilation is roughly datable to either the early eighth century or the first half of the ninth century, but this cannot be determined exactly. The gnomology contained either secular and theological material or, more likely, exclusively secular material, since we would not expect sayings of a theological content to be transmitted under the names of the emperors. A close parallel to a gnomology such as this is the *Florilegium Profanum*, the third section of the famous *Corpus Parisinum*. There are good reasons to suppose that Psellos used a collection of imperial sayings for his *Chronographia* as well. This is of particular importance, for it elucidates that embedding his texts with quotations was one of Psellos' favoured narrative techniques. Thus, the writer shows himself to be in step with the current literary trends.

Ulysse, Tzetzés et l'éducation à Byzance

Valeria Flavia Lovato*

Ulysse, « le philosophe » : dans plusieurs passages de ses commentaires aux poèmes homériques Eustathe définit ainsi le héros de l'*Odyssee*, dont il interprète les périlleux voyages comme une allégorie du long parcours qu'il faut accomplir pour obtenir la connaissance et devenir finalement un authentique *sophos* [σοφός]. Les épisodes qui se prêtaient le plus à une telle lecture, permettant de valoriser amplement la supériorité de la *sōphrosynē* [σωφροσύνη] d'Ulysse, étaient sans doute ceux des Sirènes, de Calypso et de Circé¹.

C'est ici l'interprétation de l'épisode de Circé proposée par Eustathe qui va servir d'introduction à ce travail. Voyons comment l'exégète byzantin commente la rencontre entre Ulysse et la terrible déesse qui pouvait transformer les hommes en animaux :

ἡ δὲ ἀλληγορία ἐν τούτοις Ἑρμῆν μὲν οἶδε συνήθως τὸν λόγον, μῶλυ δὲ τὴν παιδείαν, ὡς ἐκ μῶλου ὃ ἐστὶ κακοπαθείας περιγινόμενην [...] λαβὼν δὲ αὐτὸ (scil. τὸ μῶλυ) ἐξ Ἑρμοῦ ὁ λόγιος Ὀδυσσεὺς συγγίνεται τῇ ἡδονῇ, ταχὺ περὶ αὐτὸν ἐλθούσῃ κατὰ τὸ ἐαυτῆς ἔθος διὰ τὸ τῆς κακίας εὐληπτον. οὐ περιγίνεται δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐκείνη καθὰ καὶ τῶν ἐταίρων, οὐ γὰρ αἰδρεῖσιν κατ' ἐκείνους ἔπεται.

* Cet article n'aurait jamais vu le jour sans l'aide et la générosité de Tommaso Braccini, qui m'a permis de consulter sa traduction inédite des *Carmina Iliaca*. J'adresse également mes remerciements à Paolo Cesaretti, Eric Cullhed, Patrick Finglass et Ioannis Vassis, ainsi qu'aux réviseurs anonymes, pour leurs remarques précieuses. Mes remerciements vont aussi à la Fondation Zerilli-Marimò pour la bourse qui m'a permis de compléter ce travail. Finalement, je tiens à remercier Barbara Wahl pour son aide inestimable qui est allée, comme toujours, bien au-delà des corrections de langue et de style.

1 L'appropriation du personnage d'Ulysse par les philosophes remonte à une longue tradition qu'il serait impossible de résumer ici. Pour une analyse du rôle joué par la figure d'Ulysse chez les philosophes anciens, à partir de Socrate et Platon jusqu'aux premiers siècles de l'Empire, voir Silvia Montiglio, *From Villain to Hero. Odysseus in Ancient Thought* (Ann Arbor, 2011). Pour les Néoplatoniciens, qui ne sont pas pris en considération par Montiglio, voir Jean Pépin, « The Platonic and Christian Ulysses, » in *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought*, éd. Dominic J. O'Meara (Albany, 1982), pp. 3–18, en particulier pp. 5–9.

συνὼν δὲ καὶ χρώμενος ἐπιστημόνως αὐτῇ κατὰ λόγον ὀρθὸν αὐτός τε ἄνθρωπος μένει, καὶ ἐκείνους λύεται σώζων².

Selon l'interprétation allégorique la plus répandue, dans ces vers Hermès représente la raison et le *mōly* l'éducation, comme pour laisser entendre que l'éducation elle-même est le fruit du combat (*mōlos*), c'est-à-dire de la souffrance [...] Après avoir reçu le *mōly* des mains d'Hermès, le savant Ulysse fait l'expérience du plaisir, qui tout de suite l'enveloppe, selon sa coutume habituelle, le mal étant contagieux. Mais Ulysse ne se laisse pas soumettre par le plaisir, comme l'avaient fait ses compagnons. En effet, à la différence de ces derniers, Ulysse ne l'accueille pas sans en avoir conscience. Au contraire, il le fréquente et il en jouit consciemment et dans la juste mesure ; ainsi, il réussit non seulement à conserver sa nature humaine, mais il parvient aussi à sauver ses compagnons.

Dans l'interprétation proposée par Eustathe, Ulysse, comme on l'avait anticipé, représente le σοφός qui, suivant le guide de la *paideia* [παιδεία] – symbolisée par le *mōly* [μῶλυ] qu'Hermès avait donné au héros – peut affronter de façon convenable la tentation du plaisir, qui est à identifier avec la dangereuse Circé. De plus, grâce à son lucide détachement, Ulysse-philosophe réussit à sauver ses amis qui, n'ayant pas su résister à la femme et à ses charmes, avaient été transformés en cochons.

Lisons maintenant le commentaire que nous propose pour le même épisode l'autre grand érudit du douzième siècle, Jean Tzetzés. Il s'agit d'un court extrait de ses *Allégories à l'Odyssée* :

Τζέτζης τὸν Ὀδυσσεά δέ φησιν ἐκχοιρωθῆναι | πλέον τῶν φίλων τῶν αὐτοῦ, ἐφ' ὅλοκλήρῳ ἔτει | τῇ Κίρκῃ συγκαθεύδοντα πορνείοις τοῖς ἐκείνης. | Οὕτως ἡ Κίρκῃ λέγεται καὶ γὰρ χοιροῦν ἀνθρώπους³.

Tzetzés déclare qu'Ulysse se conduisit encore plus en cochon | Que ses compagnons, couchant pendant une année entière | Avec Circé dans ses bordels. | C'est pour cette raison qu'on dit que Circé transformait les hommes en cochons.

² Eustathe, *Commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam*, éd. Johann Gottfried Stallbaum, 2 vols [Leipzig, 1825–1826 (réimpr. Cambridge, 2010)], 1:381, 9–10, 16–20.

³ Herbert Hunger, « Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 1–12 » *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 48 (1955), p. 294, 14–17.

La différence par rapport au commentaire d'Eustathe est évidente. Refusant la lecture désormais traditionnelle, Tzetzés déclare que, à son avis, Ulysse n'avait pas du tout été supérieur à ses compagnons ; tout au contraire, ayant accepté de s'unir à Circé, il s'est conduit en étant encore plus « cochon » qu'eux⁴.

Une si violente manifestation d'hostilité à l'égard du protagoniste de l'*Odyssee* n'est pas une exception dans l'œuvre de l'érudit. Au contraire, elle représente un véritable *Leitmotiv*. De plus, une attitude semblable de la part de Tzetzés apparaît encore plus frappante si l'on considère le portrait du héros que nous pouvons lire dans les œuvres d'Eustathe, d'Isaac Porphyrogénète et de plusieurs autres érudits byzantins⁵, contemporains et antérieurs⁶.

Je poursuivrai d'abord en approfondissant ce sujet et en cherchant en premier lieu à présenter un tableau général du rôle qu'Ulysse joue dans l'œuvre de Tzetzés. Nous verrons que l'érudit byzantin est extrêmement agacé par la célébrité du héros, qui apparaît comme une conséquence des louanges qu'Homère lui a rendues sans qu'il en soit digne.

En second lieu, j'examinerai les raisons pour lesquelles Tzetzés avait une opinion si négative du fils de Laërte. J'essayerai en même temps de montrer que, malgré son intention de ne pas consacrer à Ulysse plus d'espace qu'il ne mérite, l'érudit ne peut pas se passer de la figure du héros, qui représente un élément incontournable de sa formation et de son imaginaire.

On verra, en outre, que les apparitions du personnage d'Ulysse sont souvent liées aux polémiques littéraires et philosophiques qui animaient la Byzance du XII^e siècle et auxquelles Tzetzés ne peut pas s'empêcher de participer avec sa véhémence habituelle.

Commençons notre exposé avec un passage de la *Théogonie* de Tzetzés qui nous permettra non seulement de mieux comprendre son attitude à l'égard d'Ulysse, mais aussi d'observer quelles stratégies il adopte pour ramener le héros à sa juste valeur. Dans l'extrait que nous allons examiner, Tzetzés est en train de présenter les chefs achéens qui participèrent à la guerre de Troie :

4 Voir aussi les remarques de Tommaso Braccini, « Riscrivere l'epica : Giovanni Tzetze di fronte al ciclo troiano » *CentoPagine* 5 (2011), 43–57, pour ce passage des *Allégories à l'Odyssee* voir surtout p. 53. Il est possible que Tzetzés se soit inspiré de la *Chronique* de Malalas, qui proposait une lecture semblable de l'épisode de Circé : voir Jean Malalas, *Chronographia*, éd. Johannes Thurn (Berlin, 2000), 5.19.52–72, p. 89–90. La violente attaque contre Ulysse, cependant, n'apparaît pas dans le texte de Malalas et remonte à Tzetzés seul. Pour l'influence de la *Chronique* sur Tzetzés, voir infra note 12.

5 Voir, par exemple, Isaac Porphyrogénète, *Praefatio in Homerum*, éd. Jan Fredrik Kindstrand (Uppsala, 1979), 41, 167–171.

6 Voir Filippomaria Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse. La tradizione esegetica greca all'Odissea*, 2^e édition (Rome, 2011), pp. 137–340.

ἦν Ἀχιλλεὺς ὁ κράτιστος ἀπάντων τῶν Ἑλλήνων, | υἱὸς θεᾶς τῆς Θέτιδος,
ἀνθρώπου δὲ Πηλέως· (595)

[...]

παῖς ἦν ὠραῖος Ἀχιλλεῖ ἐκ τῆς Δηιδαμείας, | ὁ πυρρὸς Νεοπτόλεμος, ὃς τις
πορθεῖ τὴν Τροίαν. | ἦσαν ἕτεροι σύμμαχοι κράτιστοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων (605) |
Αἴας ὁ Τελαμώνιος, πύργος ἐμψυχωμένος, | καὶ τούτου Τεῦκρος ἀδελφός, υἱοὶ
τοῦ Τελαμῶνος | καὶ Ἀχιλλέως συγγενεῖς ἐκ τῶν ἀδελφοπαίδων. | ὁ γὰρ Πηλεὺς
ἦν ἀδελφὸς καὶ Τελαμῶν καὶ Φῶκος, | καὶ Φῶκος μὲν ἐγέννησεν υἱὸν τὸν
Πανοπέα, (610) | οὗ Πανοπέως Ἐπειός, ἀνὴρ ἀριστοτέχνης, | ὃς τις τοῖς Ἑλλησι
ποιεῖ τὸν δούρειον τὸν ἵππον·

[...]

ἦν Παλαμήδης ὁ σοφός, Κλυμένης καὶ Ναυπλίου, | ὃν Παλαμήδην Ὅμηρος
σιγήσας πῶς οὐ γράφει, (620) | τὸν ἐφευρόντα τὸν πεσσόν, τὰ γράμματα καὶ
ψήφους | καὶ παρατάξεις τῶν στρατῶν καὶ μηχανὰς παντοίας, | ζυγὰ καὶ μέτρα
καὶ σταθμὰ καὶ νόσων θεραπείας, | τὸν ὃς τις κατεκόσμησε τὸν βίον τῶν
ἀνθρώπων. | πρὸς τούτοις ἦν ὁ μιὰρὸς υἱὸς ὁ τοῦ Λαέρτου, (625) | ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς
ὁ δόλιος, τοῦτον κτείνας δολίως, | τῆς Ἀντικλείας ὢν υἱός, ὡς εἶπον, καὶ
Λαέρτου, | σύνευνος Πηνελόπης δέ, πατὴρ τοῦ Τηλεμάχου⁷.

Le plus fort parmi tous les Grecs était Achille, | Fils d'une déesse, Thétis,
et d'un homme, Pélée. | [...]

Et Achille avait de Déidamie un beau fils, | Néoptolème le roux, le des-
tructeur de Troie. | Il y avait, parmi les Grecs, d'autres guerriers qui se
distinguaient par leur force supérieure : | Ajax fils de Télamon, tour
vivante, | Et son frère, Teucros. Ils étaient tous les deux fils de Télamon | Et
parents d'Achille, étant fils de frères. | En effet Pélée, Télamon et Phocos
étaient frères, | Et Phocos engendra un fils, Panopée ; | Ce dernier eut à
son tour Épéios, créateur extraordinaire, | Qui construisit pour les Grecs
le cheval de bois.

[...]

Il y avait aussi Palamède le savant, fils de Clymène et de Nauplios. |
Mais Homère, gardant pour ainsi dire le silence, ne mentionne pas
Palamède, | Celui qui inventa le damier, les lettres de l'alphabet et les
calculs, | Et les techniques de déploiement des troupes et des machines
de guerre de toutes sortes ; | Et encore la balance, les systèmes de mesure,
les poids et les remèdes pour les maladies ; | Homère ne mentionne pas
celui qui embellit la vie des hommes. | À côté de ceux-là il y avait l'abomi-
nable fils de Laërte, | Ulysse le trompeur, qui par la ruse tua Palamède. |

⁷ Jean Tzetzès, *Theogonia* (ex codice Casanatensi), éd. Immanuel Bekker (Berlin, 1841), 594–595, 603–612, 619–628.

Comme je l'ai dit, il était fils d'Anticlée et de Laërte, | Mari de Pénélope et père de Télémaque.

Tzetzés commence son catalogue avec les Éacides, nommant dans l'ordre Achille, Néoptolème, Ajax, Teucros et, de façon un peu surprenante, Épéios. On peut remarquer, en outre, que c'est à Épéios seul que Tzetzés attribue le mérite d'avoir construit le cheval de Troie⁸.

Immédiatement après les Éacides l'érudit mentionne Palamède, qui, grâce à sa sagesse extraordinaire, améliora les conditions de vie de l'armée achéenne. En particulier, aux yeux de Tzetzés, une des « inventions » les plus importantes du héros est celle de l'alphabet grec.

Aux vers 625 et suivants, nous rencontrons enfin Ulysse. Cependant, du fils de Laërte on n'évoque ni la prouesse, ni l'astuce : dans le catalogue de la *Théogonie* il apparaît seulement en tant que responsable de la mort de Palamède.

En effet, l'injuste condamnation du fils de Nauplios, causée par les ruses de l'envieux Ulysse, est un thème très cher à Tzetzés, au point qu'il y consacre presque entièrement la première partie de ses *Carmina Iliaca*. Dans la section du poème dédiée aux *Antehomerica*, Tzetzés insiste à plusieurs reprises sur l'importance de l'apport de Palamède à la mission des Achéens, soulignant en même temps la gravité du crime commis par Ulysse, qui, ne tolérant pas d'être inférieur au fils de Nauplios, l'avait accusé de trahison en fabriquant de faux éléments de preuve⁹. Le héros innocent mourait donc à cause de la superficialité de l'armée Grecque et de la crédulité d'Agamemnon¹⁰.

De plus, à cause des poèmes d'Homère, Palamède n'aurait jamais pu jouir des honneurs qu'il mérite. Le poète, ne voulant pas admettre que ses héros pré-

8 Pour la généalogie d'Épéios, voir Timothy Gantz, *Early Greek Myth*, 2 vols (Baltimore, 1993), 1:223–224 ; Georgios A. Zachos, « Epeios in Greece and Italy. Two Different Traditions in One Person, » *Athenaeum* 101/1 (2013), pp. 5–23, voir en particulier pp. 13–14. Généralement, ce « héros-artisan » ne jouait pas un rôle proéminent dans les faits de Troie. Une exception significative semblerait être représentée par l'*Iliou Persis* de Stésichore, voir Patrick J. Finglass, « How Stesichorus Began His Sack of Troy, » *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 185 (2013), 1–17, surtout 7–10. Tzetzés, au contraire, souligne à plusieurs occasions l'importance de la contribution d'Épéios à la prise de la cité de Priam, afin d'amoindrir le rôle joué par Ulysse : voir, par exemple, Jean Tzetzés, *Allegoriae Iliadis : Prolegomena*, éd. Jean François Boissonade (Paris, 1851), 655–658, p. 39.

9 À propos des mérites de Palamède et de la jalousie d'Ulysse, voir Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, éd. Petrus Aloisius M. Leone (Catane, 1995), 1.320–322, p. 21. Voir aussi 1.297–302, où Ulysse est considéré responsable non seulement de la mort de Palamède, mais aussi de celle d'Ajax fils d'Oïlée.

10 Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, 1.363–67.

férés s'étaient rendus responsables d'un crime exécrable, décida de ne jamais mentionner le fils de Nauplios, le condamnant ainsi à une injuste obscurité¹¹.

À partir de ces observations, on peut conclure que la haine que Tzetzés éprouve envers Ulysse est strictement liée au rôle que le héros avait joué dans la condamnation de Palamède. Sans doute Tzetzés reprend ici une tradition répandue, qui paraît remonter aux *Chants Cypriens*¹². Cependant, aussi bien l'hostilité à l'égard d'Ulysse que l'évidente prédilection pour Palamède semblent découler d'autres sources aussi. En effet, dans de nombreuses occasions, Tzetzés déclare se sentir particulièrement proche du fils de Nauplios.

11 Voir, par exemple, Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, scholium in 1.155, p. 131,7–12. Ce thème apparaît aussi dans l'extrait de la *Théogonie* que nous venons d'analyser : voir en particulier les vers 619–20.

12 Voir Martin Litchfield West, *The Epic Cycle. A Commentary on the Lost Troy Epics* (Oxford, 2013), p. 123. La source à laquelle Tzetzés s'inspire pour décrire la mort de Palamède est sans doute l'*Héroïque* de Philostrate : Flavius Philostratus, *Heroicus*, éd. Ludo de Lannoy (Leipzig, 1977), 33.24–37. Il faut rappeler, à ce propos, que l'*Héroïque* est à la base du récit de la mort de Palamède chez Constantin Manassès aussi : Diether Roderich Reinsch, « Die Palamedes-Episode in der Synopsis Chronike des Konstantinos Manasses und ihre Inspirationsquelle, » in *Byzantinische Sprachkunst*, éd. Martin Hinterberger, Elisabeth Schiffer, et Wolfram Hörandner (Berlin, 2007), pp. 266–276. En ce qui concerne les sources de Tzetzés, il est important de remarquer que Palamède jouait un rôle de premier plan dans l'*Ephemeris* de Dictys aussi, œuvre que l'érudit connaissait par l'intermédiaire du cinquième livre de la *Chronique* de Malalas et que nous pouvons lire seulement sous la forme du célèbre résumé latin de Septimius. Cependant, comme Malalas omet le récit de la mort de Palamède, qui par contre apparaissait chez Dictys, Tzetzés ne peut pas suivre la version de l'*Ephemeris* pour cet épisode spécifique. En tout cas, Dictys – à travers Malalas – pourrait avoir influencé à un niveau plus général la façon dont Tzetzés présente Palamède et Ulysse, même si, chez le chroniqueur, la caractérisation négative du fils de Laërte apparaît pour ainsi dire atténuée par rapport au Dictys latin (l'omission de l'épisode de la mort de Palamède est très significative à ce propos). En outre, il semble possible de reconnaître l'influence de Dictys-Malalas dans quelques extraits des *Allégories à l'Odyssée* et dans les passages des *Chiliades* où Tzetzés évoque le long *nostos* d'Ulysse : voir, par exemple, l'interprétation de l'épisode des Cyclopes chez Jean Tzetzés, *Allegoriae in Homeri Odysseam* 9.119–179 ; idem, *Historiae*, éd. Petrus Aloisius M. Leone (Naples, 1968), 10.914–938 ; Malalas, *Chronographia*, 5.17–18 ; Dictys Cretensis, *Ephemeris*, 6.5. Malheureusement, l'individuation des sources de Malalas (et par conséquent de celles de Tzetzés) est compliquée par le fait que, dans le cinquième livre, le chroniqueur s'inspire en même temps de Dictys, du mystérieux Sisyphe de Cos et de quelques autres auteurs aussi, rendant difficile la distinction entre les passages remontant à l'une ou à l'autre œuvre. Pour les sources du cinquième livre de Malalas et son influence sur les œuvres de Tzetzés, voir Elizabeth Jeffreys, Brian Croke, et Roger Scott, *Studies in John Malalas* (Sidney, 1990), pp. 176–177, 192–193, et 265–266.

À vrai dire, l'affinité qu'il ressent avec Palamède est tellement forte, que l'érudit va jusqu'à se considérer comme le portrait vivant du héros :

εἰ δέ τις καὶ τὸν Κάτωνα χρήζει μανθάνειν οἶος, | ἐμὲ βλέπेटω Κάτωνος ἔμψυχον
ζωγραφίαν | καὶ Παλαμήδους τοῦ σοφοῦ παιδὸς τοῦ τοῦ Ναυπλίου. (175) |
Ἄμφω καὶ γὰρ εὐήλικες ἦσαν πρὸς ἡλικίαν, | λεπτοί, γλαυκοί, λευκόχροες,
πυρρότριχες καὶ οὖλοι, | ὥσπερ ἐγὼ τοῖς σύμπασιν. Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν Παλαμήδης
| μηδέποτε θυμούμενος, ὡς λόγοι παριστῶσι· | τοῦτο καὶ μόνον πρὸς ἡμᾶς
διάφορον ἐσχήκει, (180) | σωματικοῖς καὶ ψυχικοῖς ὅμοιος ὢν μοι πᾶσιν, | ὡς
καὶ τὴν κόμην αὐχμηρὰν ἴσην ἡμῖν κεκτήσθαι. | Ἐξ ἀλουσίας δε ἀμφοῖν τοῦτο
συνδεδραμήκει | ἡμεῖς εὐχαίται φύσει γὰρ καὶ τῶν ἀβροβοστρύχων
[...]¹³

Si quelqu'un désire connaître aussi l'apparence de Caton, | Qu'il me
regarde, moi, qui suis le portrait vivant de Caton | Et de Palamède, le
savant fils de Nauplios. | Quant à la taille, ils étaient grands tous les deux,
| Ils étaient minces, les yeux bleus, la peau claire, les cheveux roux et cré-
pus, | Tout comme moi dans l'ensemble. Mais Palamède | Ne se mettait
jamais en colère, à ce qu'on dit. | C'est la seule différence entre nous, |
Tandis qu'il me ressemble à tous autres égards, d'un point de vue aussi
bien physique que moral, | Au point qu'il avait, tout comme moi, les che-
veux sales. | Cela est pour tous les deux une conséquence de la faible
fréquence des lavages ; | En effet nous aurions des cheveux naturellement
beaux et aux boucles souples
[...]

Mais, à part la couleur des yeux et les cheveux sales, y aurait-il d'autres points en commun entre le héros et l'érudit de Byzance ?

À bien voir, en effet, en insistant sur son incroyable ressemblance avec Palamède, Tzetzés ne fait qu'enrichir l'image de soi qu'il nous présente dans plusieurs autres passages de ses ouvrages.

En premier lieu, Tzetzés, tout comme Palamède, nous apparaît comme un bienfaiteur qui dispense les fruits de sa supérieure sagesse. Ses propres œuvres, nous communique-t-il en d'innombrables occasions, non seulement sont utiles, mais dépassent les résultats obtenus par tous ses prédécesseurs, dans n'importe quel domaine¹⁴.

¹³ Jean Tzetzés, *Historiae*, 3.173–184.

¹⁴ Voir, par exemple, Jean Tzetzés, *Allegoriae Iliadis: Prolegomena*, 480–487. Dans ce passage Tzetzés, s'adressant à l'impératrice Irène Bertha de Sulzbach, en vient à affirmer que, après avoir lu ses *Allégories à l'Iliade*, elle pourra très bien se passer d'Homère et de tous

Cependant, malgré ses vertus exceptionnelles et sa préparation impeccable, Tzetzés n'est pas apprécié par ceux qui devraient chérir son talent et qui, au contraire, récompensent des médiocres qui ne mériteraient pas l'honneur qui leur est rendu. Pire encore, tout comme Palamède, Tzetzés non seulement est injustement négligé, mais il est même persécuté à cause de sa valeur extraordinaire¹⁵.

Il est clair qu'en se présentant comme un innocent arbitrairement persécuté, l'érudit a à l'esprit son expérience macédonienne. Après avoir terminé ses études, en effet, Tzetzés était allé en Macédoine pour travailler comme secrétaire au service du *doux* Isaac. Malheureusement, son premier et dernier emploi dans la bureaucratie s'était terminé de façon plutôt brusque. Selon la version de Tzetzés, la femme de son employeur se serait éprise de lui et aurait cherché à le corrompre. Notre vertueux érudit avait pourtant repoussé les avances de cette nouvelle Circé ; cette dernière, ne pouvant pas tolérer un refus, avait fausement accusé l'innocent Tzetzés d'avoir cherché à la séduire. Le mari, naturellement, avait cru aux mensonges de sa femme et avait chassé le malheureux érudit¹⁶.

Les ressemblances entre cet épisode de la vie de Tzetzés et l'injuste condamnation de Palamède sont évidentes¹⁷. Peut-être notre érudit avait-il été inspiré par sa mésaventure en Macédoine quand il avait commencé à élaborer le thème de sa ressemblance avec le fils de Nauplios. Toutefois, il est possible que son affinité avec le héros-*sophos* injustement persécuté, sur laquelle il insiste à plusieurs reprises¹⁸, lui ait servi pour imaginer aussi sa relation avec ses collègues et avec l'élite intellectuelle constantinopolitaine, à laquelle il ne réussira jamais à s'intégrer¹⁹.

les poètes qui l'ont suivi. Voir Paolo Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI–XII secolo)* (Milan, 1991), p. 175.

15 Voir infra, note 21.

16 Voir Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, 2.137–162 et 3.284–290. Voir aussi Tommaso Braccini, « Mitografia e miturgia femminile a Bisanzio : il caso di Giovanni Tzetze, » *I Quaderni del Ramo d'Oro on-line* 3 (2010), 88–105, en particulier pp. 89–91.

17 Quand il décrit son expérience macédonienne, Tzetzés a sans doute à l'esprit le célèbre motif de la femme de Potiphar (et, surtout, ses équivalents mythiques : voir Braccini, « Mitografia e miturgia, » p. 93. Il s'agit cependant d'allusions rapides, tandis que les analogies avec le sort de Palamède semblent être bien plus saillantes.

18 À part le passage des *Chiliades* qu'on a déjà mentionné : voir supra, pp. 5–6. Voir aussi Jean Tzetzés, *Allegoriae Iliadis : Prolegomena*, 724–732.

19 Voir Maria Jagoda Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252* (Bari, 1999), pp. 53–55. Luzzatto parle d'une rupture profonde entre Tzetzés et le monde de la culture officielle, qui serait représenté par le « Sénat des Philosophes » et par l'institution que, à partir des deux célèbres articles de

À ce propos il sera utile de rappeler les nombreuses occasions lors desquelles Tzetzés se plaint de l'incompétence de ses collègues, qui, tout en ne comprenant rien et en étant de véritables barbares, obtiennent des postes prestigieux – et des salaires – qu'ils ne méritent pas²⁰. Plus encore, ces ignorants, ne se contentant pas de se réjouir de privilèges dont ils ne sont pas dignes, s'amuse à tourmenter le pauvre Tzetzés et ses étudiants, tout comme Ulysse avait persécuté le fils de Nauplios et ses amis²¹.

On peut ajouter, pour conclure, que Tzetzés insiste sur le fait que Palamède était le dernier représentant de la vérité. Avec la mort du héros, causée par les ruses du roi des menteurs, *alētheia* [Ἀλήθεια] meurt aussi. Les derniers mots que notre érudit fait prononcer à Palamède mourant sont à ce propos parti-

R. Browning, on appelle « École » ou « Académie Patriarcale »: voir Robert Browning, « The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century, » *Byzantion* 32 (1962), 167–201 et 33 (1963), 11–40. L'existence d'une pareille « école » a été récemment mise en doute. Voir, par exemple, Vasilis Katsaros, « Προδρομικοί 'θεσμοί' για την οργάνωση της ανώτερης εκπαίδευσης της εποχής των Κομνηνών από την προκομνήνεια περίοδο, » in *Η αυτοκρατορία σε κρίση(;) Το Βυζάντιο τον 11ο αιώνα (1025–1081)*, éd. Vasiliki N. Vlysidou (Athènes, 2003), pp. 443–471, en particulier pp. 445–446, mais la discussion est encore ouverte. Il est en tout cas conseillable, quand on parle d'École Patriarcale, d'avoir à l'esprit les remarques de Paul Magdalino, « The Reform Edict of 1107, » in *Alexios I Komnenos. Papers of the Second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 14–16 April 1989*, éd. Margaret Mullett et Dion Smythe (Belfast 1996), pp. 199–218, surtout pp. 212–213.

20 Les violentes critiques à l'incompétence des « faux savants » traversent l'œuvre de Tzetzés, à partir des *Carmina Iliaca*, composés quand l'érudit était au début de sa carrière de *grammatikos* (voir, par exemple, Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, scholium in 1.124a, pp. 128,23–129,11), jusqu'aux derniers livres des *Chiliades* et aux célèbres *Iambi*, rédigés après 1160, quand l'érudit s'était vu refuser le poste de μαῖστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων qu'il croyait mériter : voir Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore*, p. 54. Naturellement, les cibles des polémiques de Tzetzés changent au fur et à mesure que l'érudit croit reconnaître de nouveaux et indignes rivaux, dont l'ignorance doit être démasquée. Cependant, ce qu'il est important de remarquer ici est l'uniformité des images, des thèmes et des mots mêmes que Tzetzés utilise quand il s'agit de dénoncer l'incompétence de ces prétendus *sophoi*.

21 Voir, par exemple, Jean Tzetzés, *Scholia in Aristophanis Ranas* [*Scholia in Aristophanem* 4.3], éd. Willem Johann Wolff Koster (Groningen, 1962), 259a, p. 772 : la *κουστωδία* des faux savants tourmente un pauvre disciple de Tzetzés); *Scholia in Thucididem*, 1.123.1, éd. Carl Hude (Leipzig, 1927), pp. 89, 26–90, 28 : en ce cas la victime des persécutions est l'érudit lui-même (à propos de cette scholie, voir Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore*, pp. 46–58 ; comme le texte des scholies à Thucydide originairement publié par Hude a été considérablement amélioré par Luzzatto, dans les pages suivantes on citera directement son édition). Le thème du « talent persécuté » est typique de l'œuvre de Tzetzés et apparaît déjà dans ses premiers écrits : voir, par exemple, Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, 2.142–162.

culièrement significatifs : « Adieu, Vérité illustre : ta mort précède la mienne » [Χαίρε, Ἀλήθεια κυδρή· πρόθανες γὰρ ἐμεῖο]²².

Certes, il est possible de reconnaître dans ce cas aussi une allusion aux mésaventures macédoniennes de notre érudit. Il ne faut pas oublier, cependant, que la défense de la vérité contre les mensonges des *pseudographoi* [ψευδογράφοι] représentait pour Tzetzés un objectif essentiel de sa profession de *grammatikos* [γραμματικός]²³.

À partir de ces considérations, on peut observer que Tzetzés, comme il le fait d'ailleurs dans plusieurs autres occasions, finit par projeter son expérience personnelle sur le mythe qu'il se propose d'interpréter. Cette sorte d'identification avec la tradition qu'il commente le conduit souvent à intervenir sur cette même tradition : le résultat en est que ses œuvres, en particulier celles qui naissent comme des commentaires ou des « résumés » des grands poèmes du passé, se transforment en de véritables réécritures des originaux²⁴.

Ajoutons que Tzetzés finit par rivaliser avec cette tradition, qui semble elle aussi être perçue comme un adversaire dont les mensonges doivent être démasqués et corrigés. Je pense en particulier à la relation controversée que notre érudit paraît avoir avec Homère²⁵. Tout en le louant à plusieurs reprises, Tzetzés ne lui épargne pas non plus des critiques souvent très violentes. Et ce n'est pas un hasard si la plupart de ces invectives sont liées au rôle que le détesté Ulysse joue dans ses poèmes²⁶.

22 Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, 1.385. Tzetzés s'inspire sans doute de la version de Philostrate (voire en particulier Philostrate, *Heroicus*, 33.37), comme le fait d'ailleurs Costantin Manassès aussi : voir Reinsch, « Die Palamedes-Episode, » p. 274. Cependant, Tzetzés attachait une importance particulière au thème de la défense de la vérité et cet aspect favorisa sans doute son identification avec le héros qui mourut à cause des mensonges d'Ulysse.

23 Voir les textes commentés par Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore*, pp. 155–156.

24 Voir à ce propos Felix Budelmann, « Classical Commentary in Byzantium : John Tzetzes on Ancient Greek Literature, » in *The Classical Commentary : Histories, Practices, Theory*, éd. Roy K. Gibson et Christina Shuttleworth Kraus (Leiden, 2002), pp. 141–169, en particulier p. 152.

25 En ce qui concerne l'attitude de Tzetzés envers Homère, voir Eric Cullhed, « The Blind Bard and 'I' : Homeric Biography and Authorial Personas in the Twelfth Century, » *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 38/1 (2014), 49–67, surtout pp. 58–67 et cf. infra note 29. Voir aussi Tommaso Braccini, « Erudita invenzione : riflessioni sulla *Piccola grande Iliade* di Giovanni Tzetze, » *Incontri Triestini di Filologia Classica* 9 (2009/2010), 153–173, en particulier 165–167.

26 Un des exemples les plus frappants est sans doute une scholie de Tzetzés à ses propres *Carmina Iliaca*. Voir Jean Tzetzés, *Carmina Iliaca*, scholium in 2.241, p. 195, 12–13, p. 196, 15–20 : « ἐν δὲ τῇ πάλῃ Αἴας καὶ Ὀδυσσεύς, ὡς ληρεῖ μικρὸν ἐνταῦθα καὶ ὁ χρυσοῦς Ὅμηρος, ἰσοπαλεῖς ἐγένοντο. [...] οὕτω τοιαῦτα καὶ Ὅμηρος, ὡς ἔοικε, συνεπλάσατο, τὸν ἀσθενῆ κατοικτεῖρας ἐκείνον καὶ δύσμορφον Ἰθακήσιον. ἀλλ' αἰδεσθαι, Ὅμηρε, σεαυτὸν καὶ τὰ

Certes, cette critique d'Homère ne naît pas avec Tzetzés. Pindare déjà, dans la septième *Néméenne*, avait questionné les éloges que le poète rendait au fils de Laërte. De plus, l'identification d'Homère avec le héros de l'*Odyssée* traverse les siècles et arrive à alimenter la tradition selon laquelle Ulysse ne serait pas seulement un des personnages des poèmes homériques, mais il en serait aussi la source²⁷.

Dans l'introduction à son *Exegesis Iliados*, Tzetzés montre qu'il est au courant de cette tradition. En effet, parmi les possibles sources des poèmes homériques il mentionne, outre Orphée et le mystérieux Sisyphe de Cos, le fils de Laërte aussi²⁸.

On a cependant l'impression que, dans ce cas aussi, Tzetzés ne se limite pas à reprendre une tradition qu'il a puisée dans ses nombreuses sources. Encore une fois, l'héritage de la tradition devient un écran sur lequel l'érudit projette son expérience personnelle.

En effet, la critique de Tzetzés à Homère et à son « protégé » Ulysse représente en premier lieu une partie essentielle de la mission de laquelle notre auteur se sent investi, c'est-à-dire la défense de la vérité. De plus, on l'a vu, Tzetzés, se comparant à Palamède, croit être le seul représentant de cette vérité, le seul qui puisse juger les écrits et les affirmations des auteurs du passé et des soi-disant érudits du présent. La critique adressée à Homère et au rôle prépondérant que ce dernier assigne à Ulysse est en même temps une critique envers les interprètes d'Homère, à ceux qui, tout en ayant lu et commenté ses poèmes, n'ont pas su démasquer les « mensonges » qui y étaient contenus.

Dans le panorama culturel de la Byzance du XII^e siècle, où les poèmes homériques constituaient une partie essentielle de la formation des étudiants, se décrire comme le seul « interprète » fiable d'Homère était certainement une manière efficace de valoriser ses talents, soulignant en même temps l'inaptitude des autres exégètes, soit qu'ils appartiennent aux siècles passés soit qu'ils vivent sous le règne des Comnènes.

Cependant, si les critiques que Tzetzés adresse à ses « collègues » et rivaux sont sans appel, son attitude à l'égard d'Homère, on l'a vu, est plutôt ambiguë. Tout en accusant le poète d'avoir tendancieusement altéré les faits de Troie,

ἔπη καὶ τῶν ῥημάτων τὸν ὄγκον, ὃν πρότερον ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐξεκένωσας καὶ δώης σαυτὸν εἰς ἀνασκευὴν παισὶ ῥητορεύουσιν, ὡς δῆθεν συγγεγραφῶς ἀνακόλουθα καὶ κακόπλαστα. »

27 Voir, par exemple, Philostrate, *Heroicus*, 43.12–16 avec le commentaire de Lawrence Kim, *Homer Between History and Fiction in Imperial Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 206–211.

28 Jean Tzetzés, *Exegesis in Homeri Iliadem*, éd. Manolis Papathomopoulos (Athènes, 2007), 39.17–40.1.

l'érudit Byzantin le considère aussi comme la source de toute sagesse et il est clair que dans certains passages il arrive aussi à s'identifier au grand poète²⁹.

Il ne sera donc pas surprenant, à ce moment-là, de remarquer que la même ambigüité que Tzetzés manifeste envers Homère peut être observée aussi dans son attitude à l'égard d'Ulysse.

On est encore une fois dans le domaine des polémiques avec les autres lettrés de son temps. Aux yeux de l'agressif Tzetzés, ses rivaux apparaissent au fur et à mesure comme des *boubaloi* [βούβαλοι] illettrés ou comme des cochons qui se roulent dans les dégoûtants produits de leur ignorance. De plus, ajoute Tzetzés, quand un Ulysse arrive et cherche à les affranchir de leur misérable état, ils ne comprennent pas la valeur de l'aide qu'on leur offre et ils préfèrent continuer à vivre dans cette situation abjecte et révoltante. Il est clair que dans ces passages notre érudit s'approprie de la fonction civilisatrice souvent attribuée à Ulysse, s'identifiant au fils de Laërte qui, grâce au *mōly* [μῶλυ] divin, c'est-à-dire grâce à sa sagesse supérieure, peut guider ses compagnons et leur rendre la forme humaine :

Τανῦν δε τρισεξάγιστα τῶν ἀμαθῶν κνωδάλων | βίβλους βαρβάρους γράφοντα
καὶ τρισεπιβαρβάρους (65) | ὡς τεχνικοὶ κηρύττονται τοῖς μεθυσοκοττάβοις, |
καὶ τεχνικὸν μὴ γράφοντες μηδέν, μηδὲ εἰδότες, | τρεφόμενοι κοπρῶνι δε τῆς
Κίρκης ἀτεχνίας | οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἐθέλουσιν ἐὰν τὸ τρώγειν κόπρον, | ἀλλὰ καὶ εἴ
τις Ὀδυσσεὺς Ἑρμοῦ βαστάζων μῶλυ, (70) | λόγους κανόνας τε τεχνῶν, ἅπερ
κοσμοῦσι βίον, | ἐκ χοίρων τούτους βουληθῇ τέχναις ἀνθρώπους δρᾶσαι, | ὅσος

29 Cullhed, « The Blind Bard, » pp. 58–67 met très bien en évidence la tendance de Tzetzés à s'identifier à Homère et à représenter sa propre activité de *grammatikos* sur la base de la tradition biographique concernant le poète. Cette attitude, de prime abord, semblerait être incompatible avec les attaques que l'érudit adresse à Homère dans d'autres occasions. Comme il n'est pas possible d'approfondir ici un thème si complexe, je me limiterai à présenter quelques rapides remarques. En premier lieu, on verra que l'attitude de Tzetzés envers Homère paraît évoluer au cours de sa carrière, peut-être aussi à cause de l'affaiblissement du lien d'affinité qu'il croyait avoir avec Palamède. Deuxièmement, à bien y regarder, Tzetzés ne semble pas tout simplement se présenter comme un *nouveau* Homère, mais comme un *meilleur* Homère. Tout d'abord, en effet, l'érudit déclare être le seul qui ait vraiment compris les poèmes homériques : voir Cullhed, « The Blind Bard, » p. 60. De plus, il se vante d'avoir composé des œuvres qui rendent « superflues » aussi bien l'*Illiade* que l'*Odyssée* : voir supra note 24. Dans ce contexte, donc, non seulement les critiques mais aussi les louanges que Tzetzés adresse à Homère semblent faire partie de la stratégie d'autopromotion qui est le vrai *Leitmotiv* de toutes ses œuvres : si Homère est le plus grand des poètes, qu'est-ce qu'on devrait dire du seul homme qui est parvenu aussi bien à le comprendre qu'à le devancer ?

ὁ γρύλλος παρ' αὐτῶν, ἡ βόρβορος δὲ πόση, | χεῖται κατὰ τοῦ θέλοντος τούτους
ποιεῖν ἀνθρώπους, | ἀπόνως κόπρον θέλουσι καὶ γὰρ σιτεῖσθαι πλεόν, (75) | ἢ
μετὰ πόνων, ὥς εἰπεῖν, ἄρτον φαγεῖν ἀγγέλων³⁰.

Trois fois maudites soient les bêtes ignorantes | Qui écrivent des livres
barbares et trois fois barbares | Et qui se présentent en tant que savants à
de piètres ivrognes, | Tout en ne connaissant et en n'écrivant rien qui soit
conforme aux règles de l'art. | Au contraire, ils se nourrissent du fumier
produit par l'ignorance de Circé ; | Et non seulement ils n'éprouvent pas
le désir d'arrêter de le manger, | Mais, même si un Ulysse, maîtrisant le
mōly d'Hermès | Et les fondements de l'art – qui constituent l'ornement
de la vie –, | Veut les transformer de cochons qu'ils sont en hommes grâce
aux principes de l'art, | Ils couvrent de tous leurs grognements et de toute
leur souillure | Celui qui voulait les rendre des hommes. | Et ils préfèrent
continuer à se nourrir d'excréments sans se donner de peine, | Plutôt que
de faire l'effort nécessaire pour arriver à goûter, pour ainsi dire, le pain
des anges.

L'attitude de Tzetzés ne pourrait être plus différente par rapport au passage des
Allégories à l'Odyssée qu'on avait examiné au début. Le texte que nous venons
de lire, en effet, présente une interprétation de l'épisode de Circé qui est très
semblable à celle proposée par Eustathe.

Certes, cette « anomalie » dans l'attitude de Tzetzés s'explique en premier
lieu par sa volonté de dégrader le plus possible ses rivaux ; et les comparer à
des cochons est sans doute une stratégie efficace. De plus, d'un côté Tzetzés
ressent constamment le besoin d'affirmer sa supériorité ; de l'autre, il ne réus-
sit jamais à éviter de faire référence au mythe. Dans ce cas, donc, l'épisode qui
se prêtait le plus à son propos était celui d'Ulysse chez Circé et l'érudit aurait
accepté de l'utiliser malgré son hostilité envers le héros.

Cependant, Tzetzés ne manquait pas d'*exempla* mythiques qui s'adaptent
à ses desseins. Très souvent, par exemple, il se compare à Héraclès qui doit
nettoyer les ordures produites par les enseignants de l'école contemporaine et
par leurs élèves³¹.

Toutefois, le recours à la figure d'Ulysse dans le contexte des polémiques
contre l'école contemporaine, la « nouvelle Circé », est plutôt fréquent, surtout
dans les écrits les plus récents. Cela ne veut pas dire que l'opinion de Tzetzés à
l'égard d'Ulysse ait changé ; au contraire, le fils de Laërte, on le verra, reste un

30 Jean Tzetzés, *Historiae*, 10.64–76.

31 Voir par exemple la scholie à Thucydide citée par Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore*, pp. 25–28.

point de référence négatif dans les dernières œuvres aussi. Cependant l'attitude de l'érudit à l'égard du héros se fait moins extrême, ses attaques deviennent plus indirectes et moins corrosives.

Le même phénomène, en effet, peut être observé aussi en ce qui concerne Homère. Tzetzés, on l'a vu, avait toujours exprimé son admiration envers le poète, mais il ne lui avait pas épargné de violentes critiques, dans ses premières œuvres en particulier, où il l'accusait d'avoir altéré les faits de Troie pour encenser Ulysse. Cette idée ne disparaît pas des écrits de Tzetzés, mais la façon dont il l'exprime change significativement.

Dans un passage des *Chiliades*, par exemple, le fait qu'Homère célèbre Ulysse devient presque un mérite du poète qui, étant le meilleur des *rhētores* (ῥήτορες), réussit à valoriser un héros qui n'était pas doué de qualités extraordinaires³².

Il est possible que cette attitude plus modérée soit liée aussi au changement de *status* que subit Palamède. Dans les derniers livres des *Chiliades*, en effet, le fils de Nauplios apparaît plutôt rarement³³. Les seuls passages dans lesquels l'érudit le mentionne sont ceux qui concernent l'histoire de l'alphabet : dans ces occasions, Tzetzés cite Palamède exclusivement pour lui nier la paternité de l'invention grâce à laquelle il était célébré comme un bienfaiteur de l'humanité, notamment l'invention des lettres de l'alphabet grec. L'érudit, en effet, nous communique que, après de diligentes recherches, il avait découvert que les Grecs connaissaient l'alphabet avant l'époque de la guerre de Troie. Donc Palamède n'en avait pas été l'inventeur³⁴. Peut-être cette découverte avait-elle amoindri la grandeur du fils de Nauplios aux yeux de Tzetzés, affaiblissant ainsi le lien d'affinité qu'il croyait avoir avec ce héros-intellectuel et rendant en même temps moins violente son hostilité envers Ulysse.

Pour revenir à ce dernier, si les critiques que Tzetzés lui adresse sont moins directes, cela ne signifie pas qu'elles n'existent plus. Comme on l'a dit, le fils de Laërte ne jouera jamais, dans l'œuvre de Tzetzés, le rôle positif qu'il semble avoir chez la plupart des érudits byzantins, pour lesquels le héros représentait l'image du *philosophos* [φιλόσοφος].

En fait, à bien y regarder, il semble possible d'entrevoir un lien entre la figure d'Ulysse et celle du philosophe dans certains passages de Tzetzés aussi. Seulement, chez notre érudit le héros semble être le symbole du *mauvais* philosophe.

32 Jean Tzetzés, *Historiae*, 11.749–808.

33 Tandis que, dans le troisième livre encore, Tzetzés insistait sur le thème de sa propre ressemblance avec le héros : voir *supra*, pp. 331–332.

34 Jean Tzetzés, *Historiae*, 12.29–118.

Une confrontation entre un extrait des *Lettres* et le passage des *Chiliades* où Tzetzés commente ce même extrait nous permettra de justifier et mieux approfondir cette suggestion.

Après avoir patiemment attendu pendant des semaines, Tzetzés décide d'écrire pour la deuxième fois au *didaskalos* Stephanos afin de solliciter l'envoi d'un cahier qui lui avait été promis des mois auparavant. Irrité par la négligence de son correspondant, qui, à ce qu'on peut déduire du contenu de la lettre, s'occupait d'études philosophiques, l'érudit conclut sa missive avec le commentaire suivant :

καὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐντεῦθεν καλῶ οὐ γνῶσιν τῶν ὄντων ἢ ὄντα εἰσὶν, ἀλλὰ διδασκαλίαν καὶ παίδευσιν τοῦ 'ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὅμοια'³⁵.

Dorénavant je ne définirai pas la philosophie comme la science de la vraie nature des choses, mais comme la discipline qui apprend à « *dire beaucoup de mensonges semblables à la vérité* ».

Dans les *Chiliades*, glosant ce même passage, Tzetzés nous révèle la source de la citation conclusive, avec laquelle il stigmatisait le comportement du « philosophe » Stephanos :

Ἐν Ὀδυσσεΐᾳ Ὀδυσσεὺς τοῖς ἔπεσιν Ὀμήρου (52) | ὥς πένης ἐρωτώμενος παρὰ τῆς Πενελόπης | ὁποῖος ἦν ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς εἶπερ κατείδε τοῦτον, | ἔφη πολλὰ μὲν ἕτερα καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῦτο· (55) | ἴσκει ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα'³⁶.

Dans l'*Odyssée*, selon les vers d'Homère, | Pénélope demanda à Ulysse, qui était travesti en mendiant, | De décrire Ulysse lui-même, s'il l'avait vraiment vu. | Le faux mendiant dit plusieurs choses et, entre autres, il prononça les mots suivants : | « *Il était capable de dire beaucoup de mensonges semblables à la vérité* ».

Donc, chez Tzetzés aussi, Ulysse se prête à représenter la figure du *philosophos* ; cependant, les vertus que le héros partage avec les adeptes de la philosophie

35 Idem, *Epistulae*, éd. Petrus Aloisius M. Leone (Leipzig, 1972), 32, p. 48,3–6.

36 Idem, *Historiae*, 8.52–56. Cf. *Odyssea*, 19.203 (il est important de remarquer que, dans l'*Odyssée*, c'est le poète qui prononce ces mots, tandis que Tzetzés semblerait les attribuer à Ulysse).

sont bien différentes par rapport à celles qu'Eustathe appréciait dans l'extrait que nous avons commenté au début de cet exposé.

Les deux textes que nous venons de lire s'insèrent dans le contexte de la compétition entre philosophie et rhétorique qui, depuis longtemps, animait le débat des intellectuels byzantins³⁷. Il est naturel que Tzetzés, en tant que *grammatikos*, se range du côté de l'art de la parole, dont il affirme la supériorité à plusieurs occasions³⁸.

Cela ne veut pas dire que Tzetzés soit hostile à la philosophie en tant que telle. Dans un court poème qui a été récemment republié, par exemple, il exprime son admiration pour le commentaire à Aristote rédigé par Psellos, dont il souhaite pouvoir un jour écrire une digne suite³⁹.

Cela dit, il est quand même significatif que Tzetzés, voulant stigmatiser la *mauvaise* philosophie, choisisse de faire allusion justement au héros que la plupart des érudits byzantins considérait comme le symbole du *sophos*. À vrai dire, au cours de ma recherche, j'ai remarqué que Tzetzés semble faire référence au modèle négatif représenté par Ulysse surtout quand il s'agit de blâmer un philosophe bien précis, c'est-à-dire Platon.

Il s'agit d'une suggestion que j'espère pouvoir développer à une autre occasion. Pour l'instant je me limiterai à remarquer que la section des *Chiliades* que Tzetzés consacre à Platon semble rapprocher les voyages du philosophe aux pérégrinations d'Ulysse⁴⁰. De plus, à plusieurs endroits, l'érudit attribue à Platon toutes les caractéristiques négatives qu'il avait précédemment données à Ulysse⁴¹. En outre, selon Tzetzés, Platon ne mériterait pas la popularité dont il jouit, ses fameux dialogues étant le fruit d'un plagiat.

Cette hostilité de Tzetzés envers Platon semble être liée à la campagne anti-platonicienne qui avait été promue par les Comnènes après la condamnation

37 Voir à ce propos Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 334 ; Antonio Garzya, « Literarische und rhetorische Polemiken der Komnenenzeit, » *Byzantinoslavica* 34 (1973), 1–14, surtout pp. 11–13.

38 Jean Tzetzés, *Scholia in Aristophanis Nubes* [*Scholia in Aristophanem* 4.2], éd. Douwe Holwerda (Groningen, 1960), 255, p. 444, 12–15.

39 Voir Nikos Agiotis, « Tzetzes on Psellos Revisited, » *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 106/1 (2013), 1–8, pour le texte du poème voir pp. 4–5. Plus important encore, Tzetzés avait composé un commentaire à l'*Isagoge* de Porphyre : Nigel G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium. Revised Edition* (Londres 1996), p. 191.

40 Jean Tzetzés, *Historiae*, 10.783–11.3.

41 En effet, le philosophe athénien est au fur et à mesure accusé d'être un hypocrite, un flatteur et un envieux qui ne tolère pas le succès de ses adversaires et cherche à les calomnier en composant des invectives *ad hoc*.

de Jean Italos⁴². Dans ce cas, donc, notre érudit suivrait la ligne dictée par la cour impériale et par la hiérarchie ecclésiastique⁴³, étant, pour une fois, en harmonie avec le monde de la « culture officielle ».

En tout cas, dans cette occasion aussi, le personnage d'Ulysse et les caractéristiques négatives que Tzetzés lui attribue semblent inspirer le portrait de Platon qu'il nous présente, constituant une sorte de canevas consolidé auquel l'érudit ne peut s'empêcher de puiser. En somme, malgré son dédain à l'égard du héros de l'*Odyssée* et malgré son intention de le ramener à de plus justes proportions, Tzetzés paraît admettre implicitement que ce personnage – tout méprisable qu'il soit – est indiscutablement très « bon à penser ».

42 Voir, par exemple, Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, pp. 332–333.

43 Il ne faut pas oublier que Tzetzés avait eu de fréquents rapports avec la cour impériale, pour laquelle il avait composé la majorité de ses œuvres en vers politiques : voir Michael Jeffreys, « The Nature and Origins of the Political Verse, » *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974), pp. 141–195, surtout 150–154.

PART 7

To the Frontier



Kastron, Rabad and Ardūn: The Case of Artanuji

Nicholas Evans

Introduction*

A famous passage in Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos's *De Adminstrando Imperio* (*DAI*) tells the story of a Byzantine manoeuvre that almost went very wrong. In 923, two deaths exacerbated tensions between different branches of the ruling Bagrationi family in Iberia (see Fig. 21.3). On the death of Adarnase, his Georgian title of king, *mep'e* of K'art'li, passed to his eldest son Davit'. However, it was unclear who would receive his Byzantine court title of *kouropalatēs*, which was in the gift of the Byzantine emperor. At the same time, the death of the ruler of the *kastron* of Artanuji had meant that this crucial centre of Bagrationi power had passed into the hands of a certain Ašot 'Kiskasis' ('the Nimble'). *DAI* tells us that Ašot the Nimble feared the rising power of his son-in-law Gurgēn, who had himself been making overtures to the Byzantines. So Ašot decided to offer his *kastron* to the Byzantines. This appeared to present the Byzantine emperor Romanos Lekapenos with an opportunity to take direct control of a key potential strategic and economic outpost for Byzantine power in Transcaucasia (see Fig. 21.4).¹

However, when Romanos Lekapenos sent the Byzantine *droungarios* of the fleet, Konstantinos, to take up Ašot's offer, it became clear that the balance of forces in Iberia had been badly misjudged.² The sons of the deceased Adarnase initially suspected that the Byzantines were planning to hand the title of *kouropalatēs* to Gurgēn. When they discovered the Byzantines intended to take over Artanuji directly, though, Gurgēn and the sons of Adarnase threatened to

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1 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De Adminstrando Imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik, and trans. in English Romilly J. H. Jenkins, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C., 1967), 46.49–165, pp. 216–223; *The History of Sumbat Davit'is-dze*, trans. in English Stephen H. Rapp Jr., *Studies in Medieval Georgian Historiography: Early Texts and Eurasian Contexts* (Leuven, 2003), 38, 39, p. 360.

2 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De Adminstrando Imperio: Volume 2, Commentary*, ed. Romilly J. H. Jenkins (London, 1962), p. 178.

“make common cause with the Saracens” in order to retake the city and inflict punitive raids into Byzantine territory. An attempt to exploit divisions between the Bagrationis to gain a stronger foothold in the region nearly had exactly the opposite effect. So the Byzantine forces rapidly withdrew, and the whole incident was blamed on the *droungarios* Konstantinos.³ The latter then escorted one of Adarnase’s sons, another Ašot, back with him to Constantinople for him to be invested with the title of *kouropalatēs*.⁴

There are plenty of reasons to be wary of this account. A recurring theme of *DAI* is the ineptitude of the previous administration, of Romanos Lekapenos. At the same time, such criticisms are often used as the occasion for lessons in how to turn difficult situations around. For instance, Konstantinos suggests that if, when attempting to negotiate marriage alliances, barbarian rulers point to the precedent set by the marriage of Romanos Lekapenos’s grand-daughter to Tsar Petar I of Bulgaria, then the defence should be that Romanos was “a common, illiterate fellow, and not from among those who have been bred up in the palace, and have followed the Roman customs from the beginning”.⁵ The story about Romanos Lekapenos’s blunder over Artanuji provides a similar double function. The future emperor is being taught the tricks of blaming the previous administration and blaming subordinates – notably also shifting blame onto Konstantinos the *droungarios* – at the same time.

However, the interest of this passage for the purpose of the current paper is in its appraisal of the specific strategic significance of this particular *kastron* (see Fig. 21.5), called Artanuji in Georgian, Ardanoutzi in Greek, and now called Ardanuç in Turkish – its various names tell their own story. Jenkins provides the following translation:

The city (*kastron*) of Ardanoutzi is very strongly defended, and has moreover a considerable suburban area (*rapatin*) like a provincial city (*chōropolis*), and the commerce of Trapezus and of Iberia and of Abasgia

3 Probably not Konstantinos Lips or Konstantinos Gongyles: *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Zweite Abteilung* (867–1025), ed. Ralph-Johannes Lilie, Claudia Ludwig, Thomas Pratsch, et al., 8 vols (Berlin, 2013), 3:595–6, #23823; cf. *DAI, Commentary*, p. 179.

4 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De Ceremoniis Aulae Byzantinae*, ed. Johann J. Reiske, 2 vols (Bonn, 1829–1831), 1.45, 2.48, pp. 229–231, 687–688; Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, trans. in Engl. Ann Moffatt and Maxeme Tall, 2 vols (Canberra, 2012), 1:229–231; 2:687–8; *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. and trans. in Latin Immanuel Bekker, (Bonn, 1838), [De Romano Lacapeno] 6.9, p. 402; Bernadette Martin-Hisard, “Constantinople et les archontes du monde caucasien dans le Livre des Cérémonies, II.48,” *Travaux et Mémoires* 13 (2000), 428–465.

5 *De Administrando Imperio*, 13.149–52, pp. 72–3.

and from the whole country of Armenia and Syria comes to it, and it has an enormous customs revenue from this commerce. The country of the city of Ardanoutzin, the 'Arzyn', is both extensive and fertile, and it is a key of Iberia and Abasgia and of the Mischians.⁶

This Constantinopolitan appraisal of the significance of the *kastron* of Artanuji emphasises its excellent defences, its landed wealth, and its location on key commercial and, we might infer, military routes. It is easy to take this at face value. It seems obvious that Artanuji was well placed to be a key node for transportation of goods between Trebizond, the key outpost of Byzantine commerce on the south-east Black Sea coast, and the Transcaucasian interior, Islamic trade from the south, and Abasgian trade, with its links to the long-distance trade from across the Caucasus Mountains to the north.

However, a different impression is produced by photographs of the site of Artanuji (see Figs. 21.1 and 21.2). The description of strong defences is easy enough to understand when looking at this rocky outcrop, set in a steep valley.⁷ However, the attractions of this valley, and of the mountain valleys to which it connects, for easy travel, let alone extensive agricultural cultivation, seem less self-evident. Indeed, contemporary Georgian sources, which provide descriptions of the region a few decades beforehand, emphasise that the significance of Artanuji and its surrounding regions was by no means geographically predetermined.⁸

So how did this urban development and its associated territories become so politically and economically significant by the mid-tenth century? And exactly what kind of urban development was this *kastron*? Moreover, what then of its Arabic-sounding *rapatis* and 'Arzyn'? To answer these questions it helps to place the problem in three contexts. The first concerns the Iberian Bagrationis; the second concerns Georgian monks. The third context is that of the Islamic political, fiscal and trade systems to which Konstantinos' text appears to allude with its strange terminology. This terminology may in turn provide a clue to a source of information for chapter forty six of *DAI*.

6 Ibid., 46.42–8, pp. 216–17. The manuscripts give both Ardanoutzi and Adranoutzi forms. Moravcsik takes the former as the preferred reading.

7 Robert William Edwards, "The Fortifications of Artvin: A Second Preliminary Report on the Marchlands of Northeast Turkey," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 40 (1986), 165–182, Figures 20–30.

8 Bernadette Martin-Hisard, "Du T'ao-K'lardzheti à l'Athos: moines géorgiens et réalités socio-politiques," *Bedi Kartlisa* 61 (1984), 34–46.

The Iberian Bagrationis

In the early-tenth century the Iberian Bagrationis were a rising power in the south-west Caucasus, beginning their ascent to become “rulers of the major power in Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus at the beginning of thirteenth century”.⁹ Having migrated from Armenia in the second half of the eighth century, a branch of the Bagrationi family had established itself as the rulers of south-western Iberia, of which Artanuji became the centre.¹⁰ The eleventh-century Georgian *History of Sumbat Davit’is-dze* places particular emphasis on the “rediscovery” of Artanuji by the early-ninth century Ašot the Great:

And this Ašot *kouropalatēs* discovered in Klarjet’i, in a forest on a rock, the place where Vaxtang Gorgasali first had erected the fortress named Artanuji; and it had been destroyed by Qru “of Baghdad.” Ašot restored it and built a fortress in front of it. And near its base he built a city. And within the fortress he erected a church [in honour of] the holy apostles Peter and Paul and prepared his sepulchre there, and he settled his residence in that fortress.¹¹

The narrative uses the city to link the Iberian Bagrationis with the legendary late-fifth to early-sixth century Georgian king Vaxtang Gorgasali. The narrative device also suggests Ašot foresees the future rise of his dynasty. Ašot prepares a burial place for himself, and a stronghold for his infant sons for after his death. These would allow them to hold out when other lands that he had conquered were taken back into Muslim control in the early-ninth century. It is notable that Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos’s account of the bipartite structure of the city is mirrored here, and the priority of the *kastron* over the *rabad* is asserted. However, the development of the latter is projected back to Ašot’s rule, and there is no hint in this source of the influence of Islamic models on the city’s urban development. As we shall see, this may be misleading.¹²

9 Antony Eastmond, *Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia* (Pennsylvania, 1998), p. 1.

10 Some Georgian historians have argued that the Bagrationi family originated from “the most ancient Georgian province of Speri”, and that different branches later migrated to Armenia and K’art’li. *Istoriia Gruzii* [*History of Georgia*], ed. Nikolai Berdzenishvili, 3 vols (Tbilisi, 1962–1968), 1:129. These claims were rejected by Toumanoff: Cyril Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Georgetown, 1963), p. 322 (footnote 76), pp. 334–6.

11 *History of Sumbat*, 18, pp. 355–356.

12 *Ibid.*, 21, p. 357.

It is clear that Artanuji was a crucial centre of Iberian Bagrationi power, and was perceived as such. However, there was no unitary centre. Power was distributed within and between branches of the Iberian Bagrationi family. The first line was split between Gurgen's branch and that of his father-in-law of Ašot the Nimble. Gurgen held the title of *erist'avi* or *erist'avis* ("duke of dukes"), and is described as a particularly prominent military leader in the *History of Sumbat Davit'is-dze*.¹³ Meanwhile, Ašot the Nimble's branch of the first line had traditionally held Artanuji itself. At the same time, different members of the second line, to which Adarnase and his sons belonged, could hold the Byzantine court title of *kouropalatēs* and, from the time of Adarnase, the restored Georgian royal title of *mep'e*.¹⁴

The territorial holdings of the Bagrationi princes, the *archontes* of Byzantine sources who came into the sphere of interest of the mid-tenth century Byzantine chancellery, have been reconstructed by Bernadette Martin-Hisard. Chapter forty eight of book two of the *De Ceremoniis*, attributed, like *DAI*, to Konstantinos VII, includes a list of Iberian *archontes* in addition to the *kouropalatēs*. Like the *De Administrando*, this text makes no mention of the *mep'e*, but it does mention *archontes* of Beriasach, Karanates, Kouel and Atzara. Martin-Hisard identifies these as Upper Tao, Taos-kari, the fortress of Q'veli and Achara, respectively. Upper Tao and Taos-kari lay to the south of Artanuji, while Q'veli and Achara lay to the north. The territories to the south, closer to the emirate of Qālīqalā, Byzantine Theodosiupolis, were in the hands of the second line.¹⁵ Chapter forty five of *De Administrando* reveals that both Romanos Lekapenos and Konstantinos VII pressed the members of this branch of the Iberian Bagrationi family to provide more assistance against Qālīqalā.¹⁶

The territories to the north were divided between the two branches of the first line. In 923, the fortress of Q'veli was probably already controlled by Gurgen, the son-in-law of Ašot the Nimble. Gurgen would subsequently offer this fortress to Ašot, referred to in the *De Administrando* as Tyrokastron, in

13 Ibid., 36, 42, pp. 359, 360. The army (*eri*) of each province was commanded by an *eristavi*. The *erist'avi* or *erist'avis* was the commander of the army as a whole. Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation* (London, 1989), p. 320. Ekvtime Takaishvili describes this post as the second most important after the *mep'e*, *Arkheologicheskaia ekspeditsiia 1917-go goda v iuzhnye provintsii Gruzii* [Archaeological Expedition of 1917 in the Southern Provinces of Georgia] (Tbilisi, 1952), p. 32.

14 Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History*, pp. 496–497; idem, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de la Caucasic Chrétienne* (Rome, 1976), pp. 116–119.

15 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De Ceremoniis*, 2.48, pp. 686–688; Martin-Hisard, "Constantinople et les archontes," pp. 428–465.

16 *De Administrando Imperio*, 45.64–175, pp. 208–215.

return for Artanuji.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the territory of Achara, which marched with the easternmost districts of the Byzantine theme of Chaldia, was in 923 in the hands of Ašot's uncle, Davit'. The refusal of the latter to give his territories to Konstantinos the *droungarios* in that year would be one of the factors in the collapse of the latter's attempt to take over Artanuji.¹⁸

It is important to note that women played a crucial role in these dynastic politics, in which intermarriage helped to create ties and further tensions between different branches of the family. The daughter of Ašot the Nimble and wife of his rival Gurgén is a case in point. She would subsequently emerge as a significant political figure in her own right. After the death of her husband Gurgén in 941, who had in the intervening time taken control of Artanuji as her father had feared, she would attempt to take control of the *kastron* herself. Although this was unsuccessful, she still had to be placated with grants of other territories.¹⁹

The distributed system of power and complex dynastic politics were both the cause and product of the fact that the Iberian Bagrationis looked both ways: towards consolidation of local power, and towards creating links with imperial centres. The title of *kouropalatēs* was a Byzantine court title, and could not technically be inherited from father to son without an official appointment from Constantinople.²⁰ However, chapter forty six of *DAI* makes it clear that the Iberian Bagrationis took steps to ensure that they should determine who received the appointment. When Konstantinos the *droungarios* was on his way to Artanuji, the four sons of the previous *kouropalatēs*, Adarnase, feared that he was on his way to bestow the title on their rival Gurgén and confronted him. It is unclear exactly whom Romanos Lekapenos did have in mind for this honour, but after the crisis at Artanuji, the Byzantines' hands were forced, and it was Ašot, son of Adarnase, who went back to Constantinople to receive the title.²¹

Clearly, control of the title of *kouropalatēs* was important to Iberian Bagrationis. However, this was not the only honour available to members of the Iberian Bagrationi family. Adarnase's oldest son Davit' plays a significant role in Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos's account. His title is given in *DAI* as *magistros* – what is not mentioned in the Byzantine source is that he was also

17 *De Administrando Imperio*, 46.13–15, pp. 214–215.

18 *Ibid.*, 46.117–19, pp. 220–221.

19 *Ibid.*, 46.24–34, pp. 214–217; Eastmond, *Royal Imagery*, p. 95 puts the opposite interpretation on this passage.

20 Martin-Hisard, "Constantinople et les archontes," pp. 439–450.

21 *De Administrando Imperio*, 46.86–93, 162–165, pp. 218–219, 222–223.

the king, or *mep'e* of Georgia (K'art'li).²² An inscription that refers to these brothers from the Georgian cathedral of Iṣxani indicates this was considered the senior title. The inscription dates from 954–5, just before Smbat took the title of *kouropalatēs*, following the death of his brother Ašot, but is describing the consecration of the bishop of Iṣxani in around 937.²³ The inscription mentions the four brothers' father Adarnase, and refers to him by the title of *mep'e*. Meanwhile, the order in which it lists the brothers is revealing:

[...] After him by the orders of our glorious [and] worthy kings
| – may they be exalted by God – Davit', King of the Georgians, | Ašot
Kouropalates, Bagrat Magistros <and Sumbat | Antipatrik> dispatched to
Trebizond in Greece [Saberdznet's Trapezont'a]| our honourable, worthy
Father Stepane [...]²⁴

The inscription makes a point of mentioning the Byzantine titles – for *antipatrik* we should read *anthypatos*, although the Georgian appears to associate the title with the title *patrikios* – but it accords the local royal title of *mep'e* equal or higher status.²⁵ A few lines later, the inscription also puts a surprising local reading on church hierarchy, with a reference to a Greek “Patriarch Basili” in Trebizond. This is doubly surprising, since no patriarchate in Trebizond existed, and it would seem more normal for an Iberian bishop to have been consecrated by the Iberian *katholikos* of Mc'xet'a.²⁶ This is not, then, straightforward evidence for either Byzantine dominance or Iberian autonomy. This re-interpretation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the imperial church indicates a local negotiation between Iberian Bagrationis and Trapezuntine churchmen

22 *History of Sumbat*, 40, p. 360.

23 Wachtang Djobadze, *Early Medieval Georgian Monasteries in Historic Tao, Klarjeti, and Šavšeti* (Stuttgart, 1992), p. 211.

24 Djobadze, *Early Medieval Georgian Monasteries*, p. 210; Eastmond, *Royal Imagery*, pp. 226–227. The Byzantine Empire was called “Greece” (Saberdznet'i), from *berdzeni* (“wise [man]”) by the Georgians. Stephen H. Rapp Jr., “Sumbat Davit'is-dze and the Vocabulary of Political Authority in the Era of Georgian Unification,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 120/4 (2000), p. 575 (footnote 44).

25 Martin-Hisard, “Constantinople et les archontes,” p. 455.

26 Djobadze, *Early Medieval Georgian Monasteries*, p. 210–211. Takaishvili suggested that the lost final lines of the inscription indicated that Stepane went to Trebizond rather than Mc'xet'a because the *katholikos* had recently died. Takaishvili attributed the inflation of the title of the prelate from Trebizond either to ignorance or to a desire to increase the importance of the event. Takaishvili, *Arkheologicheskaia ekspeditsiia 1917-90 goda*, pp. 30–2.

that appears to have contradicted the official norms of Iberian and Byzantine churches alike.

The picture of the hierarchy of royal, court and ecclesiastical titles that emerges from the Iṣxani inscription can in turn be set beside a list that appears in the Georgian *Life of Grigol of Xandzt'a*, written by a monk of the monastery of Xandzt'a in 951. In the concluding pages of the *Life* we read:

Our Blessed Father Grigol passed away when the number of his years had reached 102, in the 81st chronicon (861 AD). His *vita* was written 90 years after his death, in 6554 A.M.: when Agathon was Patriarch of Jerusalem, when Mik'ael was *katholikos* of Mc'xet'a, when *kouropalates* Ašot, son of Adarnase, the king of the Georgians, ruled over us, the Georgians, when Giorgi, son of King Konstantin, ruled over the Abkhazians, when Sumbat, son of King Adarnase, was *erist'avi* of *erist'avis*, when Adarnase, son of Bagrat *magistros*, was *magistros*, when Sumbat, son of *mamp'ali* was *erist'avi*.²⁷

We therefore learn that Ašot *kouropalates* had inherited the title of *mep'e* from his brother Davit' after his death in 937. Sumbat, son of Adarnase, is given his local title of *erist'avi* of *erist'avis*, rather than his Byzantine court title of *anthypatos*. There is no mention of the Trapezuntine or Constantinopolitan clergy here: the head of the Georgian church is named, and its link to the church in Jerusalem, which is a recurrent theme in the *Life*, is alluded to. Unlike the Iṣxani inscription, this list includes members of different branches of the Bagrationi family, and not simply the sons of Adarnase: Sumbat, son of Davit' the *mamp'ali* belonged to the Klarjet'i branch of the family.

The question of these titles raises an important point about the relationship between the city of Constantinople and other cities such as that of Artanuji. Both personally and politically, there was much to be gained for rulers and aristocrats in frontier regions from titles and offices that enabled them to secure and maintain access to Constantinople, and to privileged treatment when resident. When necessary, the emperor could go further still, offering not only salaries and gifts of movable wealth, but also grants of Constantinopolitan real estate as a tool in tying Transcaucasian princes to the empire – a deliberate

27 Giorgi Merch'ule, *The Life of Grigol of Xandzt'a*, trans. in Russian Nikolai Marr, *Teksty i razyskaniia po armiano-gruzinskoi filologii* [Texts and Investigations in Armenian and Georgian Philology], 7 (St. Petersburg, 1911), 83, pp. 148–149; trans. in French Bernadette Martin-Hisard, "Moines et monastères géorgiens du 9^e siècle: la Vie de saint Grigol de Xancta," *Revue des études byzantines*, 59 (2001), 89.

strategy “to excite in other princes of the east a similar eagerness for submission to the Romans”.²⁸ However, the way in which the emperor was able to use such strategies was constrained by local politics and the concrete control of *kastra* such as Artanuji in the locality. When his control of Artanuji became insecure, Ašot the Nimble may have hoped to exchange his *kastron* for a comfortable life in Constantinople; but when the Byzantines discovered the real balance of forces, Ašot found himself retiring to the territories of his brother-in-law in Abasgia, rather than to the Byzantine capital.²⁹

Georgian Monks

A certain monk called Agapios of Kymina plays a crucial role in the *De Administrando*’s account of the events surrounding the attempted take-over of Artanuji. The passage reports that Agapios visited Artanuji on his way back to his monastery near Constantinople, returning from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It was Agapios who took the news back to the Byzantines that Ašot was keen to surrender his city.³⁰ Monks such as Agapios created a network of connections between the cities of Byzantium, Transcaucasia and the Near East.³¹ Rosemary Morris emphasised the connections between monks and laymen in southern Italy and the Byzantine heartlands further east on the grounds of common language and inclusion within the borders of the empire; the case of the Georgian monks illustrates that relations between monks and laymen in the period permeated both linguistic and administrative frontiers.³²

The specific itinerary taken by Agapios reflected the close ties between Georgian and Palestinian monasticism. *The Life of Grigol of Xandzt’a* indicates that Georgian monks in the period were looking both ways. The naming of

28 *De Administrando Imperio*, 43.85–7, pp. 192–193.

29 *Ibid.*, 46.21–2, pp. 214–215.

30 *Ibid.*, 46.54–64, pp. 216–219.

31 Cf. Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300–900* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 240–244 on figures such as the mid-ninth century Basil of Jerusalem (“priest, monk, pilgrim, would-be ambassador, and part-time trader”) and *passim*.

32 Rosemary Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium 843–1118* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 5–6. Cf. the eleventh-century *Typikon* of Grigor Bakurian written in Greek, Georgian and Armenian: “*Typikon* of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God *Petrizonitissa* in Bačkovo”, trans. Robert Jordan, in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders’ Typika and Testaments*, ed. John Thomas and Angela Hero, with Giles Constable, 5 vols. (2000), 1:507–63.

Agathon as Patriarch of Jerusalem is one indication. Another appears nearer the opening of the *Life*. Prior to the founding of the monastery of Xandzt'a, monks had travelled both to Jerusalem, in order to copy the *taktikon* of the famous monastery of Mar Saba, and to Constantinople, in order to collect relics, books and vestments for the new monastery.³³ The *Life* also contains a letter sent from some of Grigol's pupils, now monks at Mar Saba, delivered to Grigol by a Greek priest called Moisei.³⁴ The "personal commitment and the administrative support upon which orthodox monasticism was built" did not simply depend on the monks and laymen who lived in the Byzantine heartlands.³⁵ The connections between monastic communities outside the Byzantine Empire, including those in territories controlled by Muslim rulers, were also crucial.

Nevertheless, Bernadette Martin-Hisard has drawn attention to the fact that monks played a much larger role here than that of mere go-betweens. The *Life of Grigol of Xandzt'a* tells the story of the development of a flourishing group of monasteries in the region of Klarjet'i, of which Artanuji was the capital.³⁶ Grigol is described as having turned "deserts into cities".³⁷ This metaphor, although a *topos* going back to the *Life of Saint Antony*, has literal meaning.³⁸ Grigol's appraisals of the natural resources, the potential for the development of a material base for his monastic communities, are a constant theme of the *Vita*. On finding the site of the future monastery of Xandzt'a, he carefully weighs up the benefits: warm sun, but not too hot, a spring, and good quality timber. He emphasises that it is secluded, and that it lacks potential agricultural land or pasture, but it is obviously not *completely* cut off from access to these kinds of products:

33 Tamara Grzdelidze, "Georgia, Patriarchal Orthodox Church of," *Encyclopedia of Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, ed. John A. McGuckin, vol. 1 (Chichester, 2011), 264–275; Stephen H. Rapp, Jr., "Georgian Christianity," *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, ed. Kenneth Parry (Malden, Mass., 2007), pp. 137–155.

34 *Life of Grigol of Xandzt'a*, 62, trans. Marr, pp. 134–135, trans. Martin-Hisard, pp. 75–76.

35 Morris, *Monks and Laymen*, p. 6.

36 Wachtang Djobadze, "A Brief Survey of the Monastery of St. George in Hanzt'a," *Oriens Christianus* 78 (1994), 145–176. Djobadze revises the identification of Xandzt'a made by Nikolai Marr, "Dnevnik poezdki v Shavshetiiu i Klardzhethiiu", *Teksty i razyskaniia po armiano-gruzinskoi filologii* ["Diary of a Journey to Shavshet'i and Klarjet'i", *Texts and Investigations in Armenian and Georgian Philology*], 7 (St. Petersburg, 1911) pp. 125–156.

37 *Life of Grigol*, 2, trans. Marr, p. 84, trans. Martin-Hisard, p. 23.

38 Thanks to Rebecca Falcasantos for this point. On St. Antony's cultivation of marginal lands, see e.g. Athanasius, *Life of St. Antony*, ed. and trans. in English Archibald Robertson, *Select Writings and Letters of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria*, 50, pp. 209–210.

[...] there is no pasture to be mown, nor wheat fields to be ploughed, and therefore food is brought on the backs of donkeys with great difficulty. Yet there is wine, which has been planted by the brethren with utmost toil and hardship, and there are also orchards [...]³⁹

The series of monasteries Grigol had created was developing a network of marginal lands, turning “deserts into cities”.

The *Life* is also explicit about the role of private patronage from beyond the immediate Bagrationi family, with the crucial role of the magnate Gabriel Dap'anchuli in turning over resources in land and people, including a set of master masons, to the direction of the monks. Dap'anchuli stipulates that his male relatives should receive prayers and be buried there; and provided further material means for the construction of a convent at Gun'atle, under the supervision of the abbess Febronia, for his female relatives.⁴⁰ The concluding pages of the *Life*, where the list of titles of the Bagrationis is found, also notes the continued involvement of the Iberian nobility, or *aznauris*, in the monastic network: “in the monasteries built by Our Blessed Father Grigol, the abbots were the sons of the great *aznauris*”.⁴¹

The role of private patronage in the development of this monastic network in ninth- to tenth- century Iberia is significant. There are old debates about the extent to which during this period western Europe and Byzantium experienced similar processes of extension of aristocratic control over land, resources and people, in which monastic development in particular played a key role. Some years ago, Alan Harvey argued that the debate about Byzantine agrarian history had been shaped by an excessively “Constantinopolitan perspective”, which obscured similarities with the process of extension of aristocratic control over land, resources and people underway in the west.⁴² The evidence of the region around Artanuji suggests that, notwithstanding the distinctive features of the

39 *Life of Grigol*, 22, trans. Marr, p. 102, trans. Martin-Hisard, pp. 43–44.

40 *Ibid.*, 9, trans. Marr, pp. 92–95, trans. Martin-Hisard, pp. 32–33.

41 *Ibid.*, 83, trans. Marr, p. 148, trans. Martin-Hisard, p. 89. For *aznauris*, see Rapp, *Studies in Medieval Georgian Historiography*, p. 372. On the Sasanian background for the *aznauris* and their institutions, see Stephen H. Rapp Jr., *The Sasanian World through Georgian Eyes. Caucasia and the Iranian Commonwealth in Late Antique Georgian Literature* (Farnham, 2014), pp. 87–9.

42 Alan Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900–1200* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 244–268.

Transcaucasian nobilities, it would be useful to set this in a regional context that looks east as well as west.⁴³

Islamic Contexts

The *History of Sumbat Davit'is-dze* links Artanuji with the rise of the Bagrationi rulers of Iberia, starting with Ašot the Great at the beginning of the ninth century. The *Life of Grigol*, meanwhile, emphasises the role of monastic colonization in creating the conditions for regional development. However, both the official princely history, and the hagiography, obscure a third and crucial element.

We read in the *DAI* that the majority of the Iberian Bagrationi princes were prepared to “make common cause with the Saracens” in order to prevent direct Byzantine intervention into their territories, and of the close trade links between Artanuji and Syria. We have also noted the specific vocabulary Konstantinos uses to describe the city, referring to the *rapatis* and the *Arzyn*. These, it has been suggested, are Greek transliterations of the Arabic words *rabaḍ* and *arḍūn* respectively, the latter being the plural form of the Arabic word for land, *arḍ*.⁴⁴

In the context of Islamic cities, the *rabaḍ* is usually taken to refer to a commercial and artisanal sector that lay outside the walled *madīna*.⁴⁵ In the context of the Muslim conquests in the east, Hugh Kennedy has gone so far as to argue for a paradoxical process of “*decastellamento*”, where the *rabaḍ* became the functioning centre of urban life.⁴⁶ The evolution of towns under Muslim control in the Caucasus had a different trajectory, but commercial and artisanal

43 See note 41 above for *aznauris*. Cf. the private family holdings of the *naxarars* of Arsacid Armenia: Robert Thomson, “Armenia (400–600)”, in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500–1492*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge, 2008), p. 159; Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History*, pp. 139–144. Toumanoff’s own family heritage presumably influenced his view that, “the dynastic aristocracy of Caucasia – and not the Crown, not even the Church, nor the gentry, nor the burgesses, nor the peasants – were the natural and unquestioned leaders of the community, the creative minority that set for it the pattern of behaviour, the style of life.” Ibid. p. 144.

44 *De Administrando Imperio, Commentary*, p. 178. Edward Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London, 1863–1893), 1, p. 48.

45 Paul Wheatley, *The Places Where Men Pray Together. Cities in Islamic Lands* (Chicago, 2001), pp. 305, 307, 311, 318, 322, 336, 513.

46 Hugh Kennedy, “From Shahrīstan to Medina,” *Studia Islamica* 102/3 (2006), 5–34.

sectors of the *rabad* type did develop outside the walls of Tbilisi.⁴⁷ It seems likely that the development of such a sector existing on the hillside below the fortress of Artanuji was influenced by Islamic models reflected in its name.

This might be seen as part of a regional development that influenced settlements within the Byzantine Empire, with the growth of centres where large numbers of Muslim merchants gathered. The contemporary geographer, Ibn Ḥawqal, tells us merchants from across the Islamic lands gathered in Trebizond before travelling to or from Constantinople. He also talks about the “immense wealth (*māl*) and extensive tax-farms (*ḍamān*)” that the Byzantine emperor’s agent was able to draw from this commerce, and notes that “these are now much more than they were in the past [...]”.⁴⁸ This passage corroborates the *DAI* account of Artanuji in indicating why close links with Trebizond would have been a source of wealth specifically in the tenth century. It also indicates the increasing importance of local actors: the implication is that the Byzantine Emperor’s agent was in a position to gain significantly greater personal wealth than earlier. The grand claims made by Trebizond’s churchmen, as implied by the Iṣxani inscription, may have its basis in the growing material power of local elites.

What then of the Arabic word *ardūn* for the *chōra* of Artanuji? Here the *History of Sumbat Davit’is-dze* gives us a clue despite itself. After the account of the death of Ašot the Great, which it dates to 826 as opposed to other sources claim of 830, it describes the fate of his sons during a period of Muslim reconquest of all the “exterior lands” which their father had conquered. In the Shavshet’i, Klarjet’i, and Nigali valleys, we learn, “everyone paid tribute to the Saracens. Yet on the other side of Artanuji they occupied their ancestral estates of their father: they installed Bagrat as *kouropalatēs*, and God granted him the authority to rule”.⁴⁹

This eleventh century text then appears to recognise a distinction between “exterior” and “ancestral” lands: between the lands from which revenue was drawn in the form of tribute, including the Shavshet’i, Klarjet’i and Nigali

47 Ramin Ramishvili, “Gruziia v epokhu razvitogo srednevekov’ia (X–XIII vv.): Goroda,” *Arkheologiiia. Krym, Severo-Vostochnoe Prichernomor’e i Zakavkaz’e v epokhu srednevekov’ia*, [“Georgia in the High Middle Ages, 10th–13th centuries: Towns”, *Archaeology. Crimea, the North-East Black Sea and Transcaucasia in the Middle Ages*] ed. Tamara Makarova et Svetlana Pletneva, (Moscow, 2003), p. 298; Mariam Lordkipanidze, “Tibilisskii emirat,” *Ocherki Istorii Gruzii* [“The Emirate of Tbilisi”, *Sketches of the History of Georgia*], 8 vols (Tbilisi, 1988), 2:339–353.

48 Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb Ṣūrat al-ard*, ed. Michael de Goeje (Leiden, 1874); trans. Johannes Kramers and Gaston Weit, *Configuration de la terre*, 2 vols (Beirut, 1964), 344, 2:337.

49 *History of Sumbat*, trans. Rapp, 21, p. 357.

valleys, and the personal hereditary holdings of the Bagrationi princes in Tao to the south.⁵⁰ The “ancestral” lands in Tao to the south were held by the second line, the descendants of Bagrat the *kouropalatēs*, while the territories controlled by the first line were concentrated in precisely those regions which are here described as having formerly been subjected to Muslim taxation. Artanuji lay in the centre of these territories.

A narrative of “reconquest” of the exterior territories may mask a less glorious reality. During a general period of fiscal decentralisation and the declining power of the ‘Abbāsid caliphate in the region, in the later-ninth or early-tenth century Bagrationis took over a system of revenue collection that had been established by Arabic-speaking literate administrators, or *kuttāb*, for their previous Muslim masters. These *kuttāb* used the Arabic word *ardūn* to refer to the “exterior lands” which Konstantinos describes as so extensive. Artanuji, in operating as the central place of this revenue collection, not just from commerce, but also from agricultural production, would have relied upon the assessments made by *kuttāb* who worked for other masters not so long before. The source of this surprising vocabulary in *DAI* may originate from this context. In fact, around the time of the events described in chapter forty six of the *DAI*, did one such *kātib*, incorrectly sensing a further change in masters from the Bagrationis to the Byzantines, provide the Byzantines with the information on which Konstantinos is drawing here?

We have already seen how Agapios of Kymina could act as emissary, pilgrim and monk at the same time, working for different masters as he moved between Transcaucasia, the Islamic world and the Byzantine Empire. An earlier figure who is described shifting between different roles and different masters appears in the *Life of Grigol* in the form of the deacon by the name of Ts’kir. The *Life* explains that this deacon was “trained in Tiflis by the amīr Sahak, the son of Ismael” (Ishāq b. Ismā’īl), before being sent as an ambassador to Ašot the Great. On the death of the bishop of Ancha, in Klarjet’i, Ts’kir asked Ašot to appoint him as the new bishop. The *Life* reports that Ts’kir’s wish was granted, and that Ts’kir then proceeded to abuse his position, and even attempt to murder Grigol. Through the intervention of the latter, Ašot was persuaded to appeal to the catholicos of Mc’xet’a to call a council and strip Ts’kir of his post, following which the latter was sent back to Ishāq, who then made Ts’kir bishop of Ancha once more. This, then, is a mid-tenth century text describing a career which involved training at the court of the Muslim ruler of Tiflis, responsibility

50 Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History*, p. 488 (footnote 227); Rapp, *Studies in Medieval Georgian Historiography*, p. 387.

as an emissary at the court of the Iberian Bagrationi *kouropalatēs*, and appointment to ecclesiastical office by both.⁵¹

Conclusion

This paper has argued that the wealth and significance of the *kastron*, *rabad* and *ardūn* of Artanuji that so impressed the Byzantines in the mid-tenth century was by no means predetermined. It was the product of three sets of factors.

The first was the increasing political and military significance of the Iberian Bagrationis. These had established a regional base around Artanuji, to the south-west of the traditional heartlands of K'art'li in the late-eighth century, but this only took on real significance once they were able to take advantage of the weakening political power of the caliphate in the second half of the following century. They did this by looking both ways, tying themselves in to Byzantine urban networks, but also consolidating local independence. This was both cause and product of their complex and often fractious intra-familial politics.

Secondly, monastic colonisation played a crucial role in developing the core territories around Artanuji. Monks provided links to an urban network from Constantinople to Jerusalem, and at the same time were able to persuade local aristocrats and rulers to turn over land, people and resources to them. Sources such as the *Life of Grigol* or the *History of Sumbat* may exaggerate the depredations caused by the Muslims, and hence the under-development or even de-development of the area in the preceding period. However, there can be no doubt that the extensive programme of monastic colonisation undertaken helped to bring more people and territories under the direct control of elite landowners.

Thirdly, while the rise of Artanuji may have been connected to the political weakening of 'Abbāsid power, the commercial and fiscal infrastructure developed during the 'Abbāsid period was central to the development of Artanuji subsequently. This appears to have been recognised by Konstantinos VII, but is unsurprisingly underplayed in the Georgian sources. Nonetheless, the same sources provide clues about the way the Iberian Bagrationis might have taken over systems of taxation from the caliphate and the emirs of Tiflis, making use

51 *Life of Grigol*, 68–70, pp. 137–139. On Ishāq ibn Ismā'īl, see Joseph Laurent, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam depuis la conquête arabe jusqu'en 886*, ed. Marius Canard (Lisbon, 1980), pp. 394–399.

of the expertise of those who may have received their training in the Muslim administration.

There is a wider implication of this story about the City and the Cities and urban development in the tenth century. The weakening of 'Abbāsid power in the late-ninth and early-tenth centuries left in its wake a vibrant economy and a series of political crises. The offer of Artanuji from Ašot the Nimble had seemed to provide the empire with an opening to take advantage of both the economic and political opportunities resulting from this situation. The significant attractions of the City no doubt weighed heavily in Ašot the Nimble's mind when he made his offer. Yet it turned out this was a world in which the Byzantines would also be confronted by assertive regional elites. For all the increased influence and military successes the Byzantines would see over the following century, the future in eastern Anatolia and Transcaucasia, would be shaped by monks and laymen with deep local roots and connections with a world by no means mediated by Constantinople alone.



FIGURE 21.1 *Artanuji exterior, looking northeast.*
SOURCE: EDWARDS (1986), FIG. 21.



FIGURE 21.2

Artanuji exterior, looking northwest.

SOURCE: EDWARDS (1986), FIG. 23.

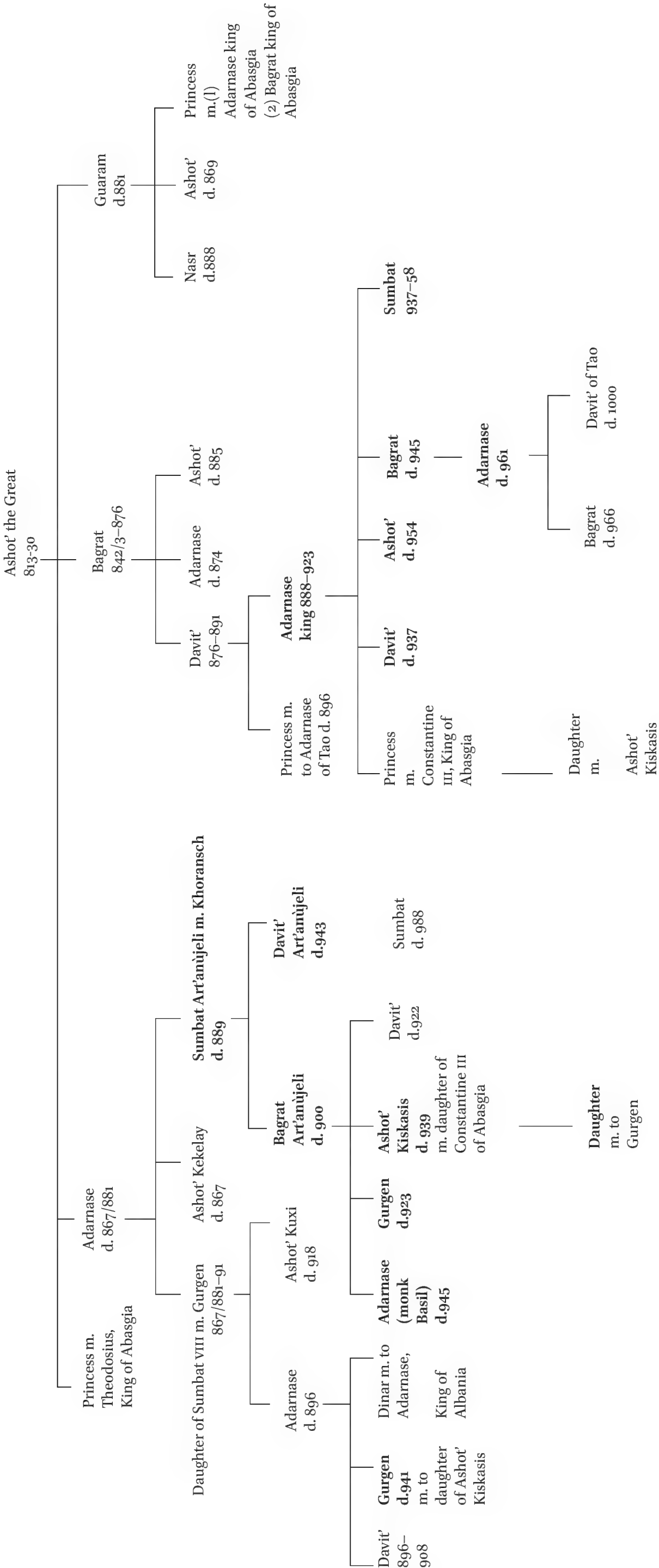


FIGURE 21.3 *Genealogy of Iberian Bagratids, based on Rapp (2003) and Toumanoff (1976).*



FIGURE 21.4 Map of western Caucasia in the tenth century.
SOURCE: MARTIN-HISARD (2000), P. 530.



FIGURE 21.5 *View of Artanuji kastron and rabad.*
SOURCE: MARR (1911), FIG. 28.

From the Frontier Cities to the City, and Back? Reinterpreting Southern Italy in the *De administrando imperio*

Lorenzo M. Bondioli

Historical writing is a powerful vehicle for the expression of ideological assertion, for it is able to address the historical issues crucially at stake and to lend to ideology the authority and prestige of the past, all the while dissimulating its status *as* ideology under the guise of a mere accounting of “what was”. The prescriptive authority of the past makes it a privileged locus for working through the ideological implications of social changes in the present and the repository of contemporary concerns and desires. As a locus of value, a revised past holds out for contemporaries the promise of perfectible present.¹

[...]

Precisely because it was so little known in any critical sense, the past could become a vehicle for change. All that was needed was to recreate it in the image of the present and then claim its authority for the legitimization of contemporary practices. Perhaps the most egregious example of this process is the fabrication of a crusading past for Charlemagne by the monks of Saint-Denis at precisely the time when French kings first took up the cross.²

When writing these words in 1997, Gabrielle M. Spiegel was expressing her articulated reply to what she perceived as a counter-productive, indeterministic derive within sociological and historical writing as a side effect of the ‘linguistic turn’. In elaborating the concept of knowledge as ‘situated knowledge’, she emphasize the non-equivalence of text and context.³ She decidedly stressed how the latter necessarily informs the former. Nevertheless, she at the same time acknowledged that text is able to shape the forms of discourse,

¹ Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text. The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore, 1997), p. 212.

² Spiegel, *The Past as Text*, pp. 85–86.

³ Spiegel, *The Past as Text*, pp. 27–35.

rather than being merely shaped by them. To exemplify this conceptual premise, Spiegel analysed the literary output of the French abbey of St. Denis, taking into account both works of history and forged charters to highlight how the monks aimed at reshaping history itself, with the intent both to conform it to the contemporary context, and to shape that same context. The main contention of this paper is that a similar approach proves helpful when transposed to a rather different context, and a rather different text, namely, the Greek treatise known by the Latin title *De administrando imperio* (*DAI*).⁴ The present study does not aim at providing a holistic reinterpretation of the *DAI*, but rather to offer a specific case-study of a segment of the text – the description of southern Italy and its history. It will be argued that there is great value in trying to understand how this section of the *DAI* was aimed at shaping and justifying the present, rather than accurately representing the past, in the same manner as the crusading histories of Charlemagne produced in St. Denis. There are, of course, some methodological obstacles to such an approach: the effectiveness of Spiegel's study partly depends on the nature of her evidence, a rich and consistent body of narrative and documentary texts produced by the monks of St. Denis over the span of various centuries. Nothing similar is available for the *DAI*, certainly one of the most controversial works of Byzantine literature as for his dating, composition, aim, audience, and circulation.

Indeed, much of the significant debate about the *DAI* revolves around the very nature of its contents, some of which has been described as astonishingly imprecise.⁵ The description of Italy did not escaped blame, as scholars marvelled at the forgetfulness that the text showed about the very cradle of Roman imperial power.⁶ However, as noted by James Howard-Johnston, researchers might have been asking the wrong questions of a text that, in fact, is not conceived as a conventional work of history.⁷ Indeed, thought-provoking attempts to reinterpret the nature of the *DAI* have been recently made. Paul Magdalino's

4 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De administrando imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik; trans. Romilly J.H. Jenkins (Washington D.C., 1967).

5 A tendency epitomised by Ihor Ševčenko's 1992 ironical article: Ihor Ševčenko, "Re-reading Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos," in *Byzantine Diplomacy – Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot, 1992), pp. 167–195, with previous bibliography. Among the attempts to see the *DAI* in a different light, one should mention the provocative interpretation of 'reduced ecumenism' expressed by Telemachos Lounges, *Κωνσταντίνου Πορφυρογέννητου De administrando imperio (Πρὸς τὸν ἴδιον υἱὸν Ῥωμαῖνόν): μία μέθοδος ἀνάγνωσης* (Thessaloniki, 1990).

6 See John B. Bury, "The Treatise *De administrando imperio*," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 15/3–4 (1906), 517–577, at 544–549.

7 James Howard-Johnston, "The *De Administrando Imperio*: A Re-examination of the Text and a Re-evaluation of its Evidence about the Rus," in *Les centres proto-urbain russes entre*

framing of the *DAI*, the *De Thematibus*, the *De Cerimoniis* and the *Treatises on Imperial Expeditions* in terms of a coherent project of ‘authorized history’ promoted by Leon VI (886–912) and Konstantinos VII (913–959) represents the first step towards a complete re-evaluation of the *DAI*.⁸ More specifically, Magdalino has hinted at a less dismissive line of interpretation for the description of Italy, stressing that ‘... Constantine should have known better, and perhaps did, but chose to propagate, or to go along with, a version of history that suited his diplomatic agenda’,⁹ and maintaining that ‘the text’s grosser errors [...] can only be explained by deliberate manipulation’.¹⁰ Similar views to Magdalino’s had already been expressed by Paolo Lamma and Elisabeth Malamut.¹¹ Especially the latter’s detailed analysis and deconstruction of the various ‘mistakes’ ostensibly found in the description of Italy represents a pivotal contribution to the debate. However, Malamut’s analysis led her to conclude that the description of Italy as whole – perceived as a unity, including Hugh of Arles’ genealogy – reflected ‘la pensée d’un empereur du 10e siècle’.¹² This position should be re-examined, especially considering Ševčenko’s legitimate caveats about assuming a direct involvement of the emperor in the compilation of the treatise.¹³ More importantly, Howard-Johnston’s identification of a coherent historico-diplomatic ‘dossier’ lying behind much of the Italian materials, probably gathered together in the reign of Leon VI and thus

Scandinavie, Byzance et Orient, ed. Michel Kazanski, Anne Nersessian, and Constantin Zuckerman (Paris, 2000), pp. 301–336, at pp. 319–320.

- 8 Paul Magdalino, “Knowledge in Authority and Authorised History: the Imperial Intellectual Programme of Leo VI and Constantine VII,” in *Authority in Byzantium*, ed. Pamela Armstrong (Aldershot, 2013), pp. 187–209. See also Paul Magdalino, “Byzantine Encyclopaedism of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries,” in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Jason König, and Greg Woolf (Cambridge and New York, 2013), pp. 219–231.
- 9 Paul Magdalino, “Constantine VII and the Historical Geography of Empire,” in *Imperial Geographies in Byzantine and Ottoman Space*, ed. Sahar Bazzaz, Yota Batsaki, and Dimiter Angelov (Boston, Mass., and London, 2013), pp. 23–42, at pp. 31–32.
- 10 Magdalino, “Knowledge in Authority,” p. 207. Nevertheless, Magdalino does not argue with the traditional evaluation of the intrinsic quality of the information, and argues that the text ‘degenerate[s] into pure fantasy’ when recounting the more remote history of Italy: Magdalino, “Constantine VII,” p. 32.
- 11 Paolo Lamma, “Il problema dei due imperi e dell’Italia meridionale nel giudizio delle fonti letterarie dei secoli IX e X,” in *Atti del III congresso internazionale di studi sull’alto medio-evo* (Spoleto, 1959), pp. 155–253; Elisabeth Malamut, “Constantin VII. et son image de l’Italie,” in *Byzanz und das Abendland in 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*, ed. Evangelos Konstantinou (Cologne, 1997), pp. 270–292.
- 12 Malamut, “Constantin VII,” p. 292.
- 13 Ševčenko, “Re-reading Constantine,” pp. 186–190.

predating the compilation of the *DAI* in its ultimate form, provides us with quite a different background against which the description of Italy should be set. Thus, this material's context is the long military and diplomatic efforts of Basileios I (867–886) and Leon VI (886–912) to absorb Lombard southern Italy into the empire between the late-ninth and early-tenth century.

The reign of the first Macedonian emperors marked a renewed intervention of the eastern empire in Italy after a long series of military setbacks. At the beginning of the ninth century, East Roman domains were reduced to the tips of Apulia and Calabria, and Sicily, the true core of Roman power in the western Mediterranean.¹⁴ Starting from 827, the Aghlabid invasion of the island considerably weakened the empire's position in the region.¹⁵ By the mid-ninth century Syracuse itself was endangered, while Muslim rule had extended to part of Calabria and Apulia: 'Byzantine Italy' was on the verge of extinction.¹⁶ However, starting from 867, Constantinople launched the first of a series of expeditions that by the 880s had resulted in the consolidation of a new territorial and administrative entity, the theme of Langobardia, embracing most of modern-day Calabria, Basilicata and Puglia.¹⁷ This new frontier province, bordering with the southern Lombard principalities of Benevento and Salerno, included cities that had been out of the reach of imperial rule for centuries. Beyond lay the Campanian cities, which, though never having formally renounced imperial authority, had not been so territorially close to the empire since the sixth century.

Such a dramatic and comparatively sudden development had complex political and ideological implications, as Constantinople had to reinterpret its role in Italy within the context of much closer relations with the southern Italian cities. A systematic description of this new 'Italian frontier' and of its diverse landscape of urban centres is to be found in the *DAI*, southern Italy

14 Vera von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione bizantina nell'Italia meridionale dal IX all'XI secolo* (Bari, 1978), pp. 5–9.

15 The canonical narrative is still Michele Amari, *Stori dei musulmani di Sicilia. Seconda edizione modificata e accresciuta dall'autore, pubblicata con note a cura di Carlo Alfonso Nallino*, 3 vols, 2nd ed. (Catania, 1933–1939). See also Mohammed Talbi, *L'Émirat aghlabide* (Paris, 1966), and Alex Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy* (Edinburgh, 2009), 7–24.

16 For Muslim expansion on the mainland, see Talbi, *L'Émirat*, 443–528; Francesco Gabrieli, "Gli Arabi in terraferma italiana," in *Gli Arabi in Italia*, ed. Francesco Gabrieli and Umberto Scerrato, (Milano, 1989), pp. 109–148; Federico Marazzi, "Ita ut facta videatur Neapolis Panormus vel Africa. Geopolitica e presenza islamica nei domini di Napoli, Gaeta, Salerno e Benevento nel IX secolo," *Schede Medievali*, 45 (2007), 159–202.

17 Von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, pp. 20–25 and pp. 31–33.

probably being the subject one of the four 'dossiers' which were reworked and compiled together to form the core of the treaty.¹⁸

In its ultimate form, the dossier opens with a chapter bearing the title of '*Of the province of Langobardia (θέματος Λαγουβαρδίας) and of the principalities and governorships therein*'.¹⁹ The very first line is highly revealing of the changes that occurred in the theoretical and political conception of Italy:

Be aware that in ancient times the entire domain of Italy, Naples and Capua and Benevento, and Salerno, and Amalfi, and Gaeta, was possessed by the Romans, I mean when Rome was the imperial city.²⁰

While the writer maintains to be recalling the times of ancient Roman power in Italy, he gives a geographically reductive acceptation to the term: Italy coincides with a galaxy of southern cities, urban centres which dominated the political scene of the ninth and tenth centuries.²¹ Thus the writer is spelling out imperial claims on southern Italy, purposely including Salerno and Amalfi, which however had risen to prominence only well after both the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the end of Justinianic Italy. This can hardly be regarded as an imprecision, as later on the writer correctly ascribes the re-foundation of Salerno to the Lombards.²² Therefore, we are confronted with a first deliberate reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present.

The following section is another example of the same process:

But after the seat of empire was removed to Constantinople, all this (region) was divided into two governments (ἀρχὰς δύο), and therefore two patricians (πατρίκιοι δύο) used to be dispatched by the emperor in Constantinople: one patrician would govern Sicily and Calabria and Naples and Amalfi, and the other, with his seat at Benevento, would govern Pavia and Capua and all the rest. They used to remit annually to the emperor the sums due to the treasury.²³

18 *De administrando imperio* 27 and 29, pp. 112–121 and pp. 127–135. See also Howard-Johnston, "The *De Administrando Imperio*," pp. 314–316 and pp. 327–329.

19 *De administrando imperio* 27.1, pp. 112–113. It has been suggested that the headings of the chapters reflect a later incorporation of marginal notes: Juan Signes Codoñer, "Los esclavos en las fuentes bizantinas de los siglos IX–X: el *De administrando imperio* de Costantino Porfirogéneto," *Ilu. Revista de Ciencias de las Religiones* 13 (2008), 115–131.

20 *De administrando imperio* 27.3–6, pp. 112–113.

21 Malamut, "Constantin VII," p. 271.

22 *Infra*.

23 *De administrando imperio* 27.6–13, pp. 112–13.

We are thus faced with a second ‘reinterpretation’: while the *stratēgos* of Sicily, whose military command was created in the late-seventh century, was often given the title of patrician and did exercise some degree of control over Calabria and Campania – at least after the fall of Ravenna – there had never been an imperial patrician permanently seated in Benevento.²⁴ The city was rather the capital of the Lombard duchy which ruled ‘Capua and all the rest’, though not Pavia, and certainly not in the name of the empire.²⁵ Still, as argued by Lamma, pretending that the territorial partition was devised by the imperial government itself before the arrival of the Lombards can be interpreted as a way of giving the ninth-century status quo a suitably ancient and ideologically sound basis.²⁶ More specifically, the passage might well reflect a desire to present the new conquests of the empire during the reign of Leon as the re-establishment of an ancient order, as in 891 Benevento briefly became the seat of the newly created theme of Langobardia.²⁷

The omission of any mention of the Gothic war fits into the same picture, and cannot be regarded as mere sloppiness. Already Malamut wondered whether this absence was a result of ‘mauvaise volonté’ or ‘ignorance’.²⁸ In fact the *De Thematibus*, also sponsored by Konstantinos VII, explicitly mentions both the Gothic occupation and Narses’ campaign in the peninsula in the description of the theme of Langobardia (θέμα Λογγιβαρδίας), a section with clear textual parallels to a similar account found in the *DAI*.²⁹ The compilers clearly had access to the same materials, which crystalises the different purposes of these two texts: a diplomatic handbook on the one hand, and an administrative/antiquarian description of the provinces of the empire on the other.

24 Von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, pp. 5–7. For the Sicilian *stratēgoi* and their titles, see Vivien Prigent and Mikaël Nïchanian, “Les stratèges de Sicile. De la naissance du thème au règne de Léon V,” *Revue des études byzantines* 61 (2003), 97–141.

25 Stefani Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” in *Storia del Mezzogiorno*, ed. Giuseppe Galasso and Rosario Romeo, 15 vols, vol. 2.1, *Il Medioevo*, 2nd ed. (Rome, 1994), pp. 85–146.

26 See Lamma, “Il problema dei due imperi,” p. 163–164.

27 Von Falkenhausen thinks that the creation of the theme was a direct consequence of the conquest of Benevento: Von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, p. 24.

28 Malamut, “Constantin VII.,” p. 275.

29 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De Thematibus*, ed. Agostino Pertusi (Città del Vaticano, 1952), pp. 96–98; Paolo Lamma, “Sulla fortuna dei Longobardi nella storiografia bizantina,” in *Atti della primo congresso internazionale di studi longobardi* (Spoleto, 1952), pp. 349–362; Malamut, “Constantin VII.,” pp. 273–274. For the dating of the *De Thematibus*, see Hélène Ahrweiler, “Sur la date du *De thematibus* de Constantin VII Porphyrogénète,” *Travaux et Mémoires* 8. *Hommage à M. Paul Lemerle* (Paris, 1981), 1–5.

If the *DAI* omits to mention Narses' defeat of the Frankish commander Boutelinos, it does recount one other story about the general, which finds no place in the *De thematibus*:

But in the times of the empress Eirene the patrician Narses [...] was governing Benevento and Pavia. [...] Fighting had been going on in the region of Pavia, and the patrician Narses had expended on the army the tribute collected for the treasury. [...] When the empress Eirene heard this she was angry and sent him a spindle and distaff, and wrote to him: '[...] we have judged it fit that you should spin, rather than that as man at arms you should defend and guide and do battle for the Romans.' On hearing this the patrician Narses wrote in reply to the empress: 'Since I am thus judged by you fit to spin and twist like a woman, I will twist you hanks with spindle and distaff such as the Romans shall never be able to unravel as long as they endure.' At that time the Lombards were dwelling in Pannonia [...]. And the patrician sent them fruits of all kinds and made them this declaration: 'Come hither and behold a land flowing with honey and milk [...] and if it pleases you, settle in [...]'. The Lombards heard and obeyed and took their families and came to Benevento.³⁰

As already noted by Bury, this story comes directly from the early Medieval Latin historiographical tradition.³¹ Most notably, it had been included by the Lombard historian Paulus the Deacon in his *Historia Langobardorum*, composed in the late-eight century:

She [Sophia] is said to have sent him this message, that she would make him portion out to the girls in the women's chamber the daily tasks of wool. To these words Narses is said to have given this answer, that he would begin to weave her such a web as she could not lay down as long as she lived. [...] [Narses] sent messengers to the nation of the Langobards, urging them to abandon the barren fields of Pannonia and come and take possession of Italy, teeming with every sort of riches. At the same time he

30 *De administrando imperio* 27.14–37, pp. 114–15, slightly modified (the toponyms have been rendered in the modern form).

31 Bury, "The Treatise," pp. 546–547; *De administrando imperio. Vol. 2, Commentary*, ed. Romily J. H. Jenkins (London 1962), p. 89.

sent many kinds of fruits and samples of other things with which Italy is well supplied, whereby to attract their minds to come.³²

It is possible that this story reached Constantinople via the Lombard South itself, where Paulus' work was extremely influential.³³ We must imagine that in the ninth century copies of it, as well as abridgements and extracts,³⁴ circulated in southern Italy, and were quarried by local history-writers for their own purposes.³⁵ These chroniclers usually set out a summary of Lombard history before the main body of the narration, with a purpose similar to that of the *DAI*, that is to provide a backdrop for the events of the ninth century,

32 Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum*, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* [hereafter SSrerGerm] 48 (Hannover, 1878), 2.5, pp. 12–187, at p. 75; trans. William D. Foulke, *History of the Langobards* (Philadelphia, 1907), pp. 59–61.

33 Paul Magdalino suggested that most of the material for the 'Italian dossier' was actually provided by oral accounts of visitors to Constantinople: Magdalino, "Constantine VII," p. 31. That might indeed be the case, but the circulation of written materials cannot be excluded, especially via centres such as Naples, where Greek was well known and translations common. See Thomas Granier, "La culture lettrée des élites princières et ducales de l'Italie méridionale latine, VIII^e–XI^e siècle," in *La culture du haut Moyen Âge: une question d'élites?*, ed. François Bougard et al. (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 171–186. An analysis of the different means of communication between Italy and Constantinople in the tenth century is provided by Vera von Falkenhausen, "Italy in the Byzantine Literature of the Tenth Century," in *Κωνσταντίνος Πορφυρογέννητος και η εποχή του* [*Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos and his Era*], ed. Athanasios Markopoulos (Athens, 1989), pp. 25–38.

34 Ten ninth-century manuscripts convey the text, or fragments of it. None of this is of southern provenance (the first southern manuscripts dating from the tenth century), but Paul's work was certainly known in Naples and in Montecassino, where the author had lived. See Paolo Chiesa and Francesco Stella, "Paulus Diaconus," in *La trasmissione dei testi latini del Medioevo: Te.Tra. 2*, ed. Paolo Chiesa and Lucia Castaldi (Firenze, 2005), pp. 482–506, at pp. 491–495.

35 Many chronicles are framed as continuations of the *Historia*, such as *Paulus Continuatus*, Andrea of Bergamo, and Erchempert: Paulus Continuatus, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saec. VI–IX* (hereafter MGH SSrerLang) (Hannover, 1878), pp. 198–219; Erchempert, *Historia Langobardorum Beneventanorum* (774–889), MGH SSrerLang, pp. 231–264; Andreas Bergomas, *Historia seu chronicon breve* (568–877), MGH SSrerLang, pp. 220–30. For the southern Lombard historical tradition, see Lidia Capo, "Le tradizioni narrative a Spoleto e a Benevento," in *VV.AA., I longobardi dei ducati di Spoleto e Benevento: atti del XVI congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto Medioevo* (Spoleto, 2003), pp. 234–288; Walter Pohl, *Werkstätte der Erinnerung: Montecassino und die Gestaltung der langobardischen Vergangenheit* (Vienna, 2001); *Italia meridionale Longobarda*, ed. Nicola Cilento, (Milan and Naples, 1971), 53–96.

explaining how and when the Lombards first came to be the dominant force in southern Italy.³⁶

The endorsement of this 'autochthonous' tradition by the *DAI* could partially be due to the scarcity of available information on the Lombard invasion, for which no proper historical narrative in Greek existed,³⁷ but might also reflect an attempt to incorporate a milestone of the Lombards' own historical memory in the context of the renewed contacts between Constantinople and the region in the later-ninth century.³⁸ Incorporate, but also manipulate – in fact the Lombard histories all correctly put the invasion in the reign of Ioustinos II. This is not the only distortion, as the *DAI* also maintains that the Lombards, who at first were camped outside Benevento, eventually seized it with a stratagem, and thereafter:

[...] marched out and subdued all that land, both the province of Langobardia and Calabria as far as Pavia, except for Otranto and Gallipoli and Rossano and Naples and Gaeta and Sorrento and Amalfi.³⁹

Thus, the text maintains that the Lombards seized first Benevento, and then Pavia, while in fact it was the other way around. Still, this chronology reflects the inverted hierarchical relation already evident in the description of the second East Roman patrician as governing Pavia from his seat at Benevento. Thus, these repeated 'mistakes' betray a deliberate attempt to justify Benevento's political eminence within the Lombard world, a prominence that the city had assumed already in the eighth century, and which steadily increased after the Frankish conquest of the northern Lombard kingdom in 774.⁴⁰ It is worth also pointing out that this version of the events is closer than one might think to the scenario postulated by modern historians for the duchy of Benevento's emergence. The hypothesis that a rebellion of Lombard *foederati*, possibly settled in the area well before the Lombard invasion of 568/9, was at the origins of the

36 See, for instance, the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensis* (568–867), MGH SSrerLang, pp. 467–89, p. 468.

37 Theophanes, the author chosen by Konstantinos as the 'official' history of the period, does not provide the answers. The chronicle completely ignores the Lombard invasion of Italy, mentioning fighting in the peninsula only cursorily in 587/88. Agathias and Theopylact Symocatta only mention the Lombards incidentally. see Lamma, "Sulla fortuna".

38 Notwithstanding Malamut's tantalizing suggestion, there is no positive proof that Liutprand of Cremona was the source for these materials, which might have reached the capital well before his embassies. See Malamut, "Constantin VII," pp. 270–271.

39 *De administrando imperio* 27.46–50, pp. 114–117.

40 Lamma, "Il problema dei due imperi," p. 164.

duchy is indeed current among scholars.⁴¹ Moreover, the detail found in the *DAI* of an initial settlement of the Lombards in a separate area, a 'small fortified city', does fit with what is known of early medieval Benevento.⁴² Thus, the *DAI* is clearly endorsing southern Lombard traditions.⁴³ On the other hand, the list of the possession remaining in imperial hands after the invasion is extremely precise and probably derives from administrative records, hinting at a quite accurate knowledge of the historical geography of Italy after the invasion.

In fact, the argument can be pushed even further. Moving the Lombard invasion of Italy from the sixth to the eighth century represents a drastic reduction of the distance between past and present imperial rule in the south.⁴⁴ As convincingly argued by Malamut, the choice of Eirene's reign was not casual either.⁴⁵ A first, quite prosaic, reason is likely to be that a Roman empress played a pivotal role in the story of Narses' betrayal. Originally this was Sophia, Ioustinos II's wife, but Eirene was in many ways a far more suitable candidate. She was the first East Roman ruler to actively involve herself in the Lombard political game, and to entertain close relations with Benevento with an anti-Frankish purpose.⁴⁶ More importantly, in 787 she bestowed the rank of imperial patrician upon Arechis II, the first duke of Benevento to assume the dignity of prince.⁴⁷ Such an unprecedented political move marked the (ephemeral) high point of East Roman influence in the Lombard South prior to the late ninth century. The duke-prince sought eastern imperial assistance against Charlemagne's interference, and was willing to bring Benevento back into Constantinople's political sphere after centuries of independence in order to hold off the Franks.⁴⁸

41 Gian Piero Bognetti, "Tradizione longobarda e politica bizantina nelle origini del ducato di Spoleto," in *L'età longobarda*, 4 vols (Milan, 1966–1968), 3:439–475.

42 Stefano Palmieri, "Duchi, principi e vescovi nella Longobardia meridionale," in *Longobardia e Longobardi nell'Italia meridionale*, ed. Andenna Giancarlo and Giorgio Picasso (Milan, 1996), pp. 43–100, at pp. 58–59.

43 See Lamma, "Il problema dei due imperi," p. 163.

44 Lamma, "Il problema dei due imperi," p. 164, argued this way the text could avoid discussing Charlemagne's involvement in Italy.

45 Malamut, "Costantin VII," pp. 275–277.

46 Ottorino Bertolini, "Carlomagno e Benevento," in *Karl der Große, Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, ed. Wolfgang Braunsfels, 5 vols (Düsseldorf, 1965–1968), 1:609–671, at pp. 635–55.

47 See the relevant letter of Pope Hadrian to Charlemagne: *Codex Carolinus*, MGH *Epistulae* 3, p. 617.

48 Bertolini, "Carlomagno e Benevento," p. 636.

If traces of the diplomatic dealings between Arechis and Eirene survived in Constantinople – or, indeed, in Benevento itself, the city being under imperial rule between 891 and 895 – this would have provided the writer with more evidence to support the idea of an administrative partition of Roman domains in the South into two areas controlled by two patricians.⁴⁹ In fact, that is precisely what would have happened had Arechis not died before the East Roman envoys could reach him with the symbols of his new status – a gilded robe, a sword, and scissors and comb to fashion his hair in the Roman style.⁵⁰ Even then, the years 891–94 had witnessed the fulfilment of this very political project, with the establishment of the *stratēgos* Symbatikios in Benevento. Sicily was by then mostly lost to the empire, but retrospective judgments should not lead to the conclusion that Constantinople was resigned to this *status quo*, especially considering the survival of the title of *stratēgos* of Sicily well into the tenth century.⁵¹

After recounting the Lombard invasion, the *DAI* follows up by providing still another list of cities:

The first city, ancient and mighty, was Capua; the second, Naples, the third, Benevento, the fourth, Gaeta, the fifth, Amalfi. Salerno was settled in the time of Sicardus, when the Lombards divided the principalities.⁵²

It is clear from this list that from the perspective of Constantinople, the geography of southern Italy was an eminently urban one. Notably, the list is a rearrangement of the one present at the opening of the chapter, recounting the extension of ancient Roman dominion in Italy. The implicit statement is that all these cities are rightfully part of the empire. In fact, no distinction is made between Lombard and Roman centres, as they are all seen as part of the same context, a world which in the late-ninth century once more was within the range of East Roman interest – and, potentially, control. There are, however, some chronological mistakes: Salerno was not settled by Sicard, but it is correct that it rose to political prominence when it became the capital of the new

49 Malamut, “Costantin VII,” p. 276–77, argues that Konstantinos desired to give an ideological underpin to Eirene’s ambitions on Benevento. I would rather suggest that the text aimed at supporting contemporary Macedonian claims. She also speculates that Konstantinos might have confused Arechis and Narses.

50 *Codex Carolinus*, p. 617.

51 For the enduring East Roman commitment to Sicily, see Vivien Prigent, “La politique sicilienne de Romain I^{er} Lécapène,” in *Guerre et société au Moyen Âge Byzance – Occident (VIII^e–XII^e siècle)*, ed. Dominique Barthélemy, (Paris, 2010), pp. 63–84.

52 *De administrando imperio* 27.50–54, pp. 116–117.

principality which detached itself from Benevento as a result of the Lombard civil war of 839–849.⁵³ The civil war itself is overlooked, but it might be argued that the peaceful partition of the principality between two brothers was a far more convenient explanation, as opposed to admitting that the agreement had been enforced by a Carolingian emperor after decades of internal strife where both sides had resorted to Muslim mercenaries.⁵⁴ Again, this is a version of the facts that might have originated in the south itself, and which the writer might have deliberately favoured. In fact, the actual document sanctioning the partition of the principality was probably known to the imperial government. In an 899 charter, Prince Guaimar of Salerno refers to an imperial chrysobull of the emperors Basil and Alexander confirming him in the possession of ‘the entire part of the Beneventan province, as it was divided between Sikenolf and Prince Radelchis’.⁵⁵ In view of this, Bury’s suggestion that the *DAI*’s misdating of the partition of the principality might be explained by postulating a copyist mistake becomes all the more credible.⁵⁶

The text then gives an account of the administrative links between Naples and Sicily, and of the vicissitudes of Capua, re-founded after having been destroyed by Muslim raiders around 841.⁵⁷ The final line then states conclusively: ‘Naples, Amalfi and Sorrento have always been subject to the emperor of the Romans.’⁵⁸ This is the only concession made to the actual distinction between Roman-aligned urban centres, and Lombard ones. Although oblique, it is a fundamental clarification, acknowledging a different degree of integration in the Campanian cities, which had influenced, and continued to influence, the relations between them and the empire.

It is here that the description of Langobardia breaks up, and mention is made of Venice and its origin. This, then, becomes the topic for a new chapter, focused on Venice, which in fact seems to be a later expansion of the more

53 See Paolo Delogu, “Il principato di Salerno,” in *Storia del Mezzogiorno*, pp. 239–277.

54 For the partition, see Jean-Marie Martin, *Guerre, accords et frontières en Italie méridionale pendant le haut Moyen Âge* (Rome, 2005), pp. 201–217.

55 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, ed. Michele Morcaldi, Mauro Schiani & Silvano de Stefano, 8 vols. (Milan-Pisa-Naples, 1873–93), 1: 139–40, n. 111.

56 The text states that from the partition to the present day, AM 6457 (949), two hundred years have passed. The numeral ρ, however, might originally have been σ, which would give the right date. See *DAI*, p. 117 (note 55). For a different interpretation, equally intended at ‘rehabilitating’ the chronology of the text, see *De Adminstrando Imperio: Commentary*, pp. 90–91. Bury’s suggestion is accepted by Malamut, “Constantin VII,” p. 279 (note 35).

57 *De administrando imperio* 27.61–67, pp. 116–117.

58 *De administrando imperio*, 27.67–68, pp. 116–117.

concise account found at the end of the chapter on Langobardia.⁵⁹ The writer then deals with Dalmatia and its inhabitants.⁶⁰ It is within this latter chapter that southern Italy comes back into the picture, somewhat unexpectedly. This section seems to constitute a different narrative unit than the previous chapter, and its collocation has to be explained by remembering the close relation between events on the Dalmatian coast and in southern Italy in the years 867–871.⁶¹ The writer recounts how the inhabitants of Ragusa, being besieged by a Muslim host, begged the emperor Basileios for help, and obtained for a fleet to be sent to their relief. Having heard of this, the Saracens:

[...] quitted the city of Ragusa and took to flight and crossed over into Langobardia and laid siege to the city of Bari and took it. Then Soldan built a palace there and was for forty years master of all Langobardia as far as Rome.⁶²

The writer is referring to the short-lived Muslim statelet known in historiography as ‘the emirate of Bari’, which controlled parts of Apulia between 840 and 871.⁶³ The establishment of this polity is closely linked to the declining fortunes of the empire in Sicily, and with the employment of Muslim mercenaries in the Lombard civil war of 839–849.⁶⁴ Usually disregarded as no more than a nest for pirates and raiders, nevertheless the *wilāyah*, or governorship, of Bari was acknowledged by the Abbasid caliph, and was certainly regarded by contemporaries as a severe danger.⁶⁵ The city attracted the hostile attention both of the Carolingian emperor Louis II and of the eastern emperor Basileios I, who formed a league in 867 to seize it.⁶⁶ The Soldan of the text is Sawdān

59 Ibid. 28, pp. 118–121.

60 Ibid. 29, pp. 122–139.

61 Infra.

62 *De administrando imperio* 29.98–103, pp. 126–129.

63 Giosuè Musca, *L'emirato di Bari* (Bari, 1964). After Musca, the city is generally thought to have been occupied by the Muslims in 847, but there are reasons to argue for 840, as I hope to show in a forthcoming study.

64 See Federico Marazzi, “*Ita ut facta videatur Neapolis Panormus*”, 159–202.

65 See al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. Michael J. De Goeje, *Liber expugnationis regionum, auctore Imāmo Aḥmed ibn Jahja ibn Djābir al-Beladsorī* (Leiden, 1866), pp. 234–35, trans. Philip K. Hitti & Francis C. Murgotten, *The Origins of the Islamic State*, 2 vols. (New York, 1916–1924), 1:371–372.

66 Musca, *L'emirato*, pp. 99–112.

al-Māwri, the last Muslim ruler of Bari, who was captured by Louis after the fall of the city in 871.⁶⁷ The *DAI* presents the events in the following terms:

[...] the emperor (Basileios) sent to Louis, king of Francia, and to the pope of Rome, asking their cooperation with the army which he, the emperor, had sent. The king and the pope acceded to the emperor's request and both of them came with a large force and joined up with the army sent by the emperor [...]; and they crossed over into Langobardia, and laid siege to the city of Bari and took it. [...] The city of Bari and the country and all the prisoners were taken by the emperor of the Romans, but Soldan and the rest of the Saracens were taken by Louis [...]⁶⁸

In reality, things went differently. The joint attempt against Bari, negotiated in 867, was unsuccessfully carried out the next year.⁶⁹ A diplomatic rupture ensued, witnessed by that unique document that is Louis' letter to Basileios, preserved in the *Chronicon Salernitanum*.⁷⁰ Bari eventually fell to the Franks and their Lombard allies, probably without any contribution by East Roman forces, in 871.⁷¹ It was only in 875 that the notables of the city, facing renewed Muslim pressure, submitted to the eastern emperor. The city then became the epicentre of East Roman power in the south, later chosen as the permanent capital of the theme of Langobardia after the loss of Benevento.⁷²

67 Marco di Branco, "Due notizie concernenti l'Italia meridionale dal *kitāb al-ʿuyūn wa l-ḥadaʾiq fī aḥbār al-ḥaqāʾiq*," *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 77 (2011), 5–13.

68 *De administrando imperio* 29.103–18, pp. 128–129. The passage also emphasises the presence, by imperial mandate, of various Slavs auxiliaries. This is noteworthy, as the famous letter of Louis II to Basileios hints at the contemporary disputes over the suzerainty on these groups ('*slaveni nostri*', according to Louis). *Chronicon Salernitanum*, ed. Ulla Westerbergh (Stockholm, 1956), pp. 117–118.

69 Musca, *L'emirato*, pp. 106–111.

70 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, pp. 107–121. The letter, denounced as a forgery by Arthur Kleinclausz, is now generally accepted as genuine. See Arthur Kleinclausz, *L'empire carolingien: ses origines et ses transformations* (Paris, 1902), pp. 441–457; René Poupardin, "La Lettre de Louis II à Basile le Macédonien," *Moyen-âge* 16 (1903), 185–202; Jules Gay, *L'Italie méridionale et l'empire byzantin* (Paris, 1904), pp. 84–89. On the failed alliance, see Ewald Kislinger, "Erster und zweiter Sieger. Zum byzantinisch-karolingischen Bündnis bezüglich Bari 870–871," *Zbornik radova Vizantoloskog Instituta* 50 (2013), pp. 245–258.

71 Musca, *L'emirato*, pp. 113–115.

72 Von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, pp. 23–27 and 52–58.

The fall of Bari was a pivotal moment, and was perceived as such by contemporaries.⁷³ It represented the meeting point of the conflicting interests of the Carolingians, the Aghlabids and the East Romans in southern Italy, a conflagration that ultimately resulted in the creation of a new East Roman Italy at the hands of the Macedonian emperors. The way in which the writer of the *DAI* decided to describe the facts surrounding this comparatively recent event is extremely revelatory, providing an interpretative key for the preceding narrative. In fact, the writer took great care in underplaying the role played by the Carolingian ruler Louis II, a contender to the imperial title and a rival for control of the south. Louis II's southern campaigns represented the peak of Carolingian influence in the region, effectively bringing Capua, Naples, Salerno and Benevento under Frankish influence.⁷⁴ However, Louis' successes were short-lived. After the fall of Bari, the prince of Benevento betrayed Louis, imprisoning him and releasing him only after he had sworn never to return south again.⁷⁵ Still, the echo of Louis' stubborn endeavours was quite alive in the later-ninth and early-tenth century. Hence the necessity to deny his role in the conquest of Bari and to further belittle him by incorporating what probably was a local southern story about Soldan's deceiving of Louis, eventually resulting in his humiliating imprisonment by the Beneventans.⁷⁶ The tone of this episode – taking up nearly a third of the chapter entitled '*Of Dalmatia and the adjacent nations in it*', and also found in the *Vita Basilii*⁷⁷ – contrasts sharply with what Malamut described as Konstantinos' acknowledgment of the '*primauté des Francs*',⁷⁸ with whom the emperor had forged a marriage alliance.

73 The account is also found in the *Vita Basilii* and in *De Thematribus*. See *Chronographiae quae Theophanis continuati nomine fertur liber quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris amplectitur*, ed. Ihor Ševčenko (Berlin, 2011), 55, pp. 198–201; *De Thematribus* 11, p. 98.

74 On Louis II, see Paolo Delogu, "Strutture politiche e ideologia nel Regno di Lodovico II," *Bullettino dell'Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo e Archivio Muratoriano*, 80 (1968), 137–189; François Bougrad, "*La cour et le gouvernement de Louis II (840–875)*," in *La royauté et les élites dans l'Europe carolingienne (début IX^e siècle aux environs de 920)*, ed. Régine Le Jean (Villeneuve-d'Ascq, 1998), pp. 246–267.

75 Hicmarus Remensis, *Annales* (861–882), MGH SSrerGerm 5, pp. 55–154, p. 117; Erchempert, *Historia Langobardorum Beneventanorum* 34, p. 247.

76 The story is enriched by borrowings from Theophylact Simocatta, possibly via Theophanes. See *De administrando imperio*, p. 128, note 126. See also Lamma, "Il problema dei due imperi," p. 191.

77 *Vita Basilii* 57, pp. 204–207.

78 Malamut, "Constantin VII.," p. 272 and p. 284: 'Une sorte de vision chevaleresque des Francs est donnée par Constantin VII dans ces textes concernant l'Italie'.

Indeed, a respectful attitude towards the Frankish royal line is detectable in the genealogy of the northern Italian king, Hugh of Arles, also found in the *DAI*.⁷⁹ Arguably, the discrepancy is an additional proof of the different circumstances and periods in which the two sections originated. The genealogy of Hugh was clearly functional to Konstantinos' own 'foreign relations', and thus composed during his rule, while the belittling of Louis is more likely to date back to the reigns of Basileios I or Leon VI, when the Franks still represented a dangerous alternative to East Roman hegemony in southern Italy. Hence the necessity of denying Louis' contribution to the fall of Bari by creating an alternative narrative crediting Basileios with this military success instead. There is at least one indication that such alternative narrative represented a deliberate manipulation. In fact, it seems probable that the actual events surrounding the fall of Bari, and the role played by the Franks in it, were still well known to the imperial court in the reign of Leon VI, before being obliterated for propagandistic reasons at the time of the compilation of the *Vita Basilii* in the reign of Konstantinos. The admittedly indirect evidence comes from a section on Franks and Lombards of the *Taktika* of Leon VI. The ethnographical information found in this work is largely borrowed from the earlier *Strategikon* attributed to the emperor Maurikios; there are, however, some additions and updates. One of the new passages states that:

They are disobedient to their leaders, especially the Franks, placing freedom above all else. They willingly go on campaign for as much time as they shall determine or that has been determined by their rulers, and only for that period of time. If it happens that they are to remain [beyond that], they bear the extension of time grudgingly and break up the formation of the expedition and withdraw to their homes.⁸⁰

These observations might of course be of general nature. Nevertheless, there is a striking coincidence between this particular critique and the experience of Frankish warfare that the eastern empire acquired at the siege of Bari, the first military operation involving both empires since the days of Charlemagne. Indeed, the military cooperation between the two empires broke down exactly because Louis had been forced to allow his troops to return home for the win-

79 *De administrando imperio* 26, pp. 109–111. Lamma, "Il problema dei due imperi", p. 161.

80 *The Taktika of Leo VI*, ed. George T. Dennis (Washington, D.C., 2010), 18.82, pp. 466–467. See also John Haldon, *A Critical Commentary on the Taktika of Leo VI* (Washington, D.C., 2014). For the place that the *Taktika* occupied in Leon's project, see Magdalino, "Byzantine Encyclopaedism", pp. 223–224.

ter before the arrival of the imperial fleet, as Louis apologetically explained in the letter to Basileios.⁸¹

Yet let us go back to the *DAI*, which eagerly recounts Louis' imprisonment, a resounding event which effectively sealed the end of his ambitions. Already a contemporary piece of poetry, the *Rythmus de captivitate Ludovici imperatoris*, witnesses the involvement in this plot of the ruler of Bari, Sawdān, styling him as a '*Kalidus ille temtator*', possibly a hint at his alleged role in persuading the Beneventan prince Adelchis II to betray Louis.⁸² A more elaborate version of the story is only found in the late-tenth century *Chronicon Salernitanum*:

The aforementioned prince Adelchis, before capturing him (Louis), consulted Sagdan, king of the Agarenes, who was then held in prison, concerning whether to capture him (Louis) and expel the emperor from his city or not [...]⁸³

The accounts found in the *DAI* and in the *Chronicon* probably depend upon a common source, possibly a popular tradition. Yet, considering that the *Chronicon* postdates the redaction of the *DAI*, it is worth considering whether this might be an instance of diplomacy at work, with a local tradition amplified by Constantinople and endorsed by a southern text. Louis' attempt to establish Carolingian rule in southern Italy had not only been a concrete military challenge, but an ideological one as well. As his letter to Basileios witnesses, Louis and his papal advisors conceived a highly articulated refutation of the East Romans' exclusive claim to the empire, while at the same time furthering the Franks' own claim to the heritage of Rome.⁸⁴ It is, therefore, worth at least wondering whether the reiteration of imperial prerogatives found in the 'Italian dossier' was not conceived as an East Roman response to Carolingian claims to the empire and southern Italy. As a matter of fact, there are isolated hints that southern Italian elites were indeed interested in this debate over the legitimacy of empire. It is again the *Chronicon Salernitanum* which allows us a precious insight into this matter. The *Chronicon* transcribes a spurious correspondence between Charlemagne and the eastern emperor, in which the latter significantly addresses the former as 'patrician' and 'first

81 See *Chronicon Salernitanum*, p. 116: '*... omnes ad sua redire permiseramus ...*'

82 Carmela Russo Mailler, "La politica meridionale di Ludovico II e il «*Rythmus de Captivitate Ludovici imperatoris*»," *Quaderni Medievali* 14 (1982), 9–27.

83 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, pp. 121–122.

84 See Girolamo Arnaldi, "Impero d'Occidente e impero d'Oriente nella lettera di Ludovico II a Basilio I," *La cultura* 4 (1963), 404–424.

consul' – but not emperor. In response, Charlemagne remarks that his possession of Rome, the '*caput mundi*', dwarfs the significance of whatever land the eastern emperor might hold.⁸⁵ In another passage, the *Chronicon* negatively comments on the use of the imperial title by Charlemagne, remarking: 'none can be called emperor, except for the ruler of the Roman kingdom, which is that of Constantinople.'⁸⁶ Is this then an instance where East Roman diplomacy was successful in propagating the Constantinopolitan point of view?

Another possible indication of the success of imperially-sponsored history can be found in the later southern annalistic tradition. The chronicle attributed to Lupus *prothospatharius*, the anonymous *Chronicon Barenses*, and the *Annales Beneventani* all present a curious duplication of the account on the fall of Bari, which they have capitulating a first time around 860/1 to 'the emperor', and then again to Louis around 866/8.⁸⁷ Two redactions of Lupus' chronicle are even less ambiguous, as they specifically mention the '*Constantinopolitan emperor*' as the first conqueror of the city.⁸⁸ Therefore, these texts seem to bear witness to two alternative traditions, one of which recounted the East Roman conquest of Bari, as fabricated in the 'Italian dossier'. This is not to suggest knowledge of the *DAI* in Norman Italy, but rather to suggest that some of the stories found in the treaty might have been put to practical use, and with some degree of success, by imperial diplomats.

The *DAI* contains one last story on the Carolingian emperor Louis, describing how he refused to come south again when Capua and Benevento were facing Saracen siege. The Lombards then turned to Constantinople, which agreed to send an army, thus relieving the cities.⁸⁹ The writer of the *DAI* concludes:

And from that time until this day the men of Capua and the men of Benevento have been under the authority of the Romans, in perfect servitude and subjection, for that great benefit which was done to them.⁹⁰

85 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, pp. 36–37.

86 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, p. 17.

87 *Annales Beneventani*, ed. Ottorino Bertolini, in *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano e Archivio Muratoriano* 42 (1923), pp. 1–163, at pp. 115–116; *Annales Barenses*, MGH *Scriptores* 5 (Hannover, 1844), pp. 51–63, p. 52; *Anonymi Barensis Chronicon*, ed. Lodovico A. Muratori (Milan, 1724), pp. 147–156, at p. 147.

88 Bertolini, "Gli *Annales Beneventani*," p. 115 (note 4); *Annales Barenses*, p. 52 n. g.

89 *De administrando imperio* 27.160–213, pp. 130–135.

90 *De administrando imperio* 27.213–16, pp. 134–135.

Again, this represents a deliberate manipulation of the actual events. Notwithstanding the treacherous Beneventans, Louis actually answered the call of Landolf, bishop of Capua, and campaigned in the south for the last time in 873.⁹¹ It was his intervention, and not that of an East Roman army, which persuaded the Saracens to forfeit the siege of Salerno. Thus, by appropriating Louis' successes, the writer of the *DAI* presents the Eastern Empire as the champion in the struggle against the Muslims, which in turn he sees as the foremost reason for southern Lombard subjection.⁹² With this last tile in place, the mosaic is complete, as a new, more recent right to rule is added to the remoter claims to imperial authority in the south presented in chapter 27.⁹³ The line of reasoning might not be as carefully conducted and compelling as the modern reader would like it, but it is nonetheless effective:

1. Southern Italy is defined by a network of politically eminent urban centres, all of which once were part of the empire. A distinction exists between cities attached to Sicily, and cities attached to Benevento. To the modern historian, this was an effect of the Lombard invasion; for the writer, this is an *administrative* distinction that came about as a result of an imperial initiative.
2. In the reign of the empress Eirene – rather than in the unpractically distant Justinianic past – and on account of the betrayal of the patrician Narses, one of the two administrative entities, centred on Benevento, was overrun by the Lombards. The Lombards set up a principality, which was later split up in two, leading to the rise of Salerno as a new centre of power.
3. Naples, Amalfi and Sorrento have *always* obeyed the empire.
4. Capua and Benevento are subject to Roman rule because the empire was able to relieve them from the Saracen threat by first eliminating the emirate of Bari, and then defending the Lombards from the ensuing Saracen reprisal. In this story the role played by the Franks is purely auxiliary, notwithstanding the fact that their involvement had been key in both cases.

Thus, certain centres' peculiarities are acknowledged, but they are masterfully explained via imperially-sanctioned administrative reforms. Military defeat

91 Barbara M. Kreutz, *Before the Normans* (Philadelphia, 1991), pp. 55–57.

92 Kreutz, *Before the Normans*, pp. 63–64.

93 The centrality of providing aid against the Muslims has been highlighted by Howard-Johnston, "The *De Administrando Imperio*," p. 315; see also Shepard, "Imperial Information," 108–109.

has been concealed under the mask of Narses' treachery, and Louis' heroic endeavours in the south have been reduced to the acts of an imperial mercenary. The beauty of these manipulations resides in the fact that most of them had their origin in the Italian peninsula itself. A core of truth sits at the centre of every assertion, making this revised narrative an eminently practical tool for diplomatic dealings. Unfortunately, we cannot trace the exact steps of this gradual process of reinterpretation of the past, as we can only access it in its final form embedded in the *DAI*. Nonetheless, all the various parts share a common objective, as they all aimed at providing the elites of the Imperial City with a conceptually coherent and politically acceptable framework through which political relations with the southern Italian cities were to be conducted in the context of renewed imperial involvement in the peninsula.

Byzantine Art beyond the Borders of the Empire: A Case Study of the Church of St. Chrysogonus in Zara

Franka Horvat

Introduction

The church of St. Chrysogonus (St. Krševan) in Zara (modern Zadar) is the only surviving building of a very influential Benedictine monastery that was dissolved during the Napoleonic era. The frescoes in its interior, however, are an excellent example of Dalmatian material culture connected to Byzantine traditions.¹ While the rich archive of the monastery is partially preserved, it unfortunately lacks information on the commissioning and construction of the church and its interior decoration. Pictorial evidence from the first centuries of the second millennium is scarce, not only for the case of Zara, but for the Dalmatian coast in general. This complicates efforts to effectively date the monument and place it into historical context. Zara was no longer under Byzantine rule at the time when the frescos were likely created, and the population of the city was almost exclusively of Latin rite. The impulses for the Byzantine cycle, therefore, must be looked for elsewhere.

This paper discusses Apulia, particularly the area around Bari, as the plausible point of reference for the frescoes in St. Chrysogonus. The geographical proximity of Apulia and Dalmatia alone suggests contact, and parallels between Dalmatian monuments and Apulian ones can be found in various types of art – sculpture, frescoes, as well as architecture. Analogies of architectural features of the church of St. Chrysogonus in Zara and churches in Bari

¹ For painting, see Tatjana Mičević- Đurić, *Bizant u srednjovjekovnome zidnom slikarstvu od Budve do Kvarnera* [*Byzantine Influence in Medieval Frescoes on the Eastern Adriatic Coast (Budva to Kvarner)*] (Zagreb, 2012). For architecture in the southern part of the eastern Adriatic, see Marinko Tomasović, “Romanička arhitektura na južnom dijelu istočnog Jadrana i problem isticanja utjecaja apulijskog graditeljstva” [“Romanesque Architecture on the Southern Part of the Eastern Adriatic and the Problem of Emphasising the Apulian Influence in Church-building,”] *Starohrvatska prosvjeta* 3 (2006), 127–163. For the territory of Istria, see Marina Vicelja, *Bizant i kamena skulptura u Istri: Ishodišta i utjecaji* [*Byzantium and Stone Sculpture in Istria: Origins and Influences*] (Zagreb, 1998).

have already been drawn (Fig. 23.1–7).² The frescoes in its interior, on the other hand, were not part of this discussion. This has likely to do with the fact that neither Bari, nor towns in its vicinity, are particularly rich in pictorial evidence of Byzantine traditions. Rural areas are much more fruitful in this respect, and it is rock-cut churches outside urban centres that provide a rich inheritance of wall painting. The material still remains largely unexplored, partially due to the quantity, and partially because of the inaccessibility and unresolved questions of ownership which hinder research.³

In the first part of the paper, I will demonstrate the likelihood that the artistic connection happened as a result of the well attested communication between the two coasts of the Adriatic Sea. Visual evidence from the church of St. Chrysogonus and four rock-cut churches will be brought together in the second part of the paper.

Connections in the Adriatic Sea

From the seventh century until the second half of the eleventh century, Dalmatia was a Byzantine province and Zara was one of the most important cities on its coast.⁴ From that time and into the later middle ages, the city was a consistent point of contention between the various political powers vying to control the region – Croatian kings, Hungarian kings, Venice, and the Croatian nobility. The presence of unusually strong noble families in Zara is one of the reasons why the city was able to retain its relative independence. It took Venice almost one hundred years to permanently subdue Zara to its rule, and even after this had been achieved rebellions against the Venetian power still took place in the city.

2 Cvito Fisković, “Contatti artistici tra la Puglia e Dalmazia”, in *Per una storia delle relazioni per le due sponde adriatiche*, ed. Pier Fausto Palumbo et al. (Bari, 1962), p. 71. This comparison can be expanded to a number of other Apulian cities, but also extends to the larger area of Southern Italy, as suggested by figuration 5.

3 Many of these rock-cut churches are part of private estates and closed to the public, or have irregular in-season-only opening hours.

4 For a comprehensive study on Dalmatia under Byzantine rule from the sixth to the ninth centuries, see Ivo Goldstein, *Bizant na Jadranu (od Justinijana do Bazilija I)* [*Byzantium on the Adriatic Coast (from Justinian to Basil I)*], (Zagreb, 1992). See also Jadran Ferluga, *Byzantium on the Balkans: Studies on the Byzantine Administration and the Southern Slavs from the 7th to the 9th Centuries* (Amsterdam, 1976); idem, *Vizantijska uprava u Dalmaciji* [*Byzantine Administration in Dalmatia*] (Belgrade, 1957).

The constant presence of Venice in Zara might give the impression that the role-models for the frescoes of St. Chrysogonus should be sought there. However, the specific relationship of Zara to Venice, and the political circumstance stemming from such a relationship, cast doubt on this idea. Venetian attempts to establish official rule in Zara met a great deal of resistance in the city, a fact that can be seen in various rebellions that took place over the better part of a century, from 1159 to 1247,⁵ when the Venetians finally managed to take over the city. A crucial event in this relationship was the crusader attack on Zara in 1202, which was instigated by Venice. Thomas the Archdeacon describes the people of Zara as “very hostile towards the Venetians [...] attacking them whenever they could, robbing them, killing them, and doing their best to do them harm.”⁶ It appears that the monastery of St. Chrysogonus also carried a strongly negative attitude towards Venice. This can be seen in a 1228 charter which reveals that the monks of St. Chrysogonus had refused to give Marin Dandolo privileged treatment whenever he came to the monastery,⁷ or formally invite him to attend the celebration on the patron saint’s holiday.⁸ Their disobedience had consequences for which they later repented and were forgiven, but this did not change their position against Venice.⁹

All this indicates that given the ongoing conflict with Venice, patrons in Zara would not purposely seek out artists from Venice to execute their commissions. Interestingly, the Zara rebellion of 1243 was connected to a significant figure from across the Adriatic Sea: Frederick II Hohenstaufen, Holy Roman emperor

5 For more information on the relationship between Zara and Venice, see Ferdo Šišić, *Zadar i Venecija od 1159–1247* [*Zadar and Venice from 1159–1247*], (Zagreb, 1900). This is an old publication, but still the most detailed long term study of the topic. The rebellions against Venice continued even after 1247, but these events are from a period not covered by this article.

6 Hrvoje Gračanin and Igor Razum, “Toma arhidakon i križarstvo” [“Thomas the Archdeacon and the Crusades,”] *Povijest u nastavi* 10/1 (2012), p. 51. Although Thomas the Archdeacon’s account demonstrates a clear Venetian bias, it nonetheless attests to the attitude the people of Zadar had towards Venice.

7 The title of this person is currently unclear. The aforementioned charter addressed him merely as a “Zarian count”, but his last name suggests affiliation with the doge’s family.

8 The State Archive of Zadar, *Documents of the Archive of St. Chrysogonus*, Capsule 15, number 87.

9 The historiography frequently emphasises that the monastery openly spoke against Venice during the rebellion of 1243–47, although it is not entirely clear what is meant by “openly.” See, for example, Stjepan Antoljak, “O arhivu Sv. Krševana kroz stoljeća” [“On the Archive of St. Chrysogonus through the Centuries,”] in *Tisuću godina samostana Svetog Krševana u Zadru* [*One Thousand Years of the Monastery of Saint Chrysogonus in Zadar*], ed. Miroslav Granić, Stijepo Obad, and Ivo Petricoli (Zadar, 1990), p. 12.

and king of Sicily and southern Italy. It was Frederick II who, with the intention of shifting the Venetian attention away from southern Italy, convinced Zara to rebel once again by promising them military assistance. Ultimately however, having seen that his political goal was accomplished, he broke his word.¹⁰

Frederick II's refusal to follow through with his promise of support for the Zara rebellion does not diminish the extent to which his earlier policy established extensive and intense networks of communication between southern Italy and the cities on the Dalmatian coast.¹¹ The trade contract that the city of Trogir signed with Apulia in 1242 may be a result of such politics. If one looks at it from this perspective, the western emperor's involvement in Dalmatian, and particularly in Zara's affairs, ceases to be an isolated instance of contact. Instead, this event becomes a pivotal moment that enabled the strengthening of communication between the two coasts. One of the obvious outcomes of an increased exchange between the various populations would have been, among other things, artistic transfers.

Trading activity in Zara before the second half of the twelfth century is undocumented.¹² Documents from the oldest notary books suggest that there were Italian cities from areas other than the Italian south which had significant input in the trading activity of Zara, namely Pisa and Ancona. These contacts are confirmed by trade agreements from 1188 and 1258, respectively.¹³ However, it is possible that the connections between Zara and Apulia – in art as well as trade – were mediated through Ragusa,¹⁴ which had strong connections with both. One instance of this connection is demonstrated by the records of a man from Ragusa who rented a ship from five men from Zara for the

10 Šišić, *Zadar i Venecija od 1159–1247*, pp. 264–266.

11 Ibid., p. 264, in which the author states that by the end of 1241, Frederick II “started to get close to Dalmatian cities Trogir and Split, and especially Zadar”.

12 Nada Klaić and Ivo Petricioli, *Zadar u srednjem vijeku do 1409* [*Zadar in the Middle Ages until 1409*] (Zadar, 1976), p. 423. Cf. Tomislav Raukar, “Prilog poznavanju sistema prihoda dalmatinskih gradova u 14. stoljeću” [“A Contribution to the Study of Systems of Income of Dalmatian Cities in the Fourteenth Century,”] *Historijski zbornik* 21/22 (1968/1969), p. 346, who states that the earliest documents from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries only refer to port tax.

13 Pisa and Ancona were not the only Italian cities with which Zara traded. It also had strong economic relations with Genoa and Florence, but that can be seen in records only from the second half fourteenth century onwards: Klaić, Petricioli, *Zadar u srednjem vijeku*, p. 434.

14 For more information on Ragusan relations with southern Italy, see David Abulafia, “Dalmatian Ragusa and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 54/3 (1976), 412–428.

purpose of trading wood in Apulia.¹⁵ Additionally, Zara was in constant need of wheat, which was frequently supplied from Apulia through Ragusa.¹⁶ Records of unmediated connections can also be found, such as that of a Zara merchant who was granted the right to supply wheat from Bari by Charles I of Anjou.¹⁷

Although no detailed study has yet been done on the contact between Zara and southern Italy, it is without doubt that a detailed examination of the notary books of both Zara and Ragusa would reveal many more similar examples. This assertion is supported by the fact that in secondary literature about Zara, one often comes across cases of *habitatores* from Apulia, a certain *cives* who had come from Apulia,¹⁸ or Apulian notaries.¹⁹ Even though these examples are presented outside the context of Zaran-Apulian relations, they nevertheless attest to an Apulian presence in Zara, which in turn strengthens the argument for artistic connections between the two regions.

The Monumental Paintings of the Church of St. Chrysogonus

In the past the main apse of the church of St. Chrysogonus was adorned by a mosaic that portrayed Christ flanked by the Virgin and John the Evangelist, and contained an inscription indicating the consecration date of the church, 1175, as well as the name of the patron, a woman named Stana, the daughter of the Zaran count Petronije.²⁰ This mosaic, the only one recorded on the coast

¹⁵ Klaić, Petricioli, *Zadar u srednjem vijeku*, p. 363.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 358.

¹⁷ I would like to thank Sabine Florence Fabianec (Ph.D. in the Croatian Institute of History) for allowing me to read her yet unpublished article and thus bringing this to my attention. This information can also be found in *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae VI (1272–1290)*, ed. Tadija Smičiklas (Zagreb, 1908), documents 285 and 339.

¹⁸ The Statute of Zara is more lenient towards foreigners in allowing them to become legal citizens than are the Statutes of Šibenik and Split. See Tomislav Raukar, “Cives, Habitatores, Forenses u srednjovjekovnim dalmatinskim gradovima” [“Cives, habitatores, forenses in Medieval Cities of Dalmatia,”] *Historijski zbornik* 29 (1977), p. 143; Klaić, Petricioli, *Zadar u srednjem vijeku*, p. 432.

¹⁹ Branka Grbavac, “Notari kao posrednici između Italije i Dalmacije: studije, službe, seobe između dvije obale Jadrana” [“Notaries as Mediators between Italy and Dalmatia: Studies, Services, Migrations between the two Adriatic Coasts,”] *Acta Historiae* 16 (2008), pp. 514–515.

²⁰ The mosaic was destroyed during the restoration of the church in the late eighteenth century. However, its composition was recorded based on a drawing by the Italian scholar Carlo Federico Bianchi, together with transcription of the dedicatory inscription, which reads: “HIC OPUS FIERI IVSSIT STANA FILIA COMITIS PETRANA JADERAE ET

of Dalmatia from that period, already alludes to Byzantine traditions, although the recorded account does not elaborate further on the iconography involved. Unfortunately, all visual evidence of the mosaic have been lost so it is impossible to draw conclusions regarding the origin of this cultural transfer.²¹

The inscription reinforces the idea that there was a strong connection between the local aristocrats and the monastery of St. Chrysogonus. The fact that the apse was adorned by a mosaic rather than a fresco suggests not only the prestige of the monastery but also the wealth and power of its patrons. These factors fit easily into a narrative in which the upsurge of Romanesque building activity which accompanied the gradual reconstruction of Zara was the manifestation of a local artistic tradition. The visual evidence, however, suggests otherwise. The fact that the mosaic was commissioned prior to the Fourth Crusade, one outcome of which was the migration of artists, perhaps indicates a purposeful, rather than a circumstantial commission. This would imply at least some familiarity of the patron(s) with the art of Byzantine centres.

The fresco cycle, which was executed sometime after the mosaic,²² is preserved only in fragments. The surviving pieces are located in the northern apse and on the northern wall just next to the apse. The conch of the northern lateral apse shows a Deesis scene (Fig. 23.9), and eight saintly figures depicted below it, four of which are at least partially preserved. Based on their

Dalmatiae Proconsulis. SUMA MAIESTAS TUA TUAQ. POTESTAS OMNI GUBERNAS PUGILLO CUNCTA SUSTENTAS. ANNO MILLENO XPI DECIES QUOQUE DENO ET DECIES SEXTO TER QUINTO MSEQ. MAIO (die) EI(us) DE(m) M(en)SIS QU(arto Lampridius arciepis) CO(pus) (us hanc ecclesiam dedicavit Sanc) TO C(h)RISOGONO QUO GAUDET IADRA PATRONO XPO REGNATE (Quinque) SEC(u)LA FUT DE ANTE...

See Carlo Federico Bianchi, *Zara Cristiana* (Zadar, 1877), pp. 301–302.

21 The drawing based on which Bianchi described the mosaic has been identified as a part of the now lost so-called Filipi manuscript from the eighteenth century: Ivo Babić, “Zadarski knez Petronja i njegova kći Stana” [“The Zadrian Count Petronja and his Daughter Stana,”] *Opuscula Arheologica* 23–24/1 (2000), p. 317.

22 There is no consensus for dating the frescoes: the dates range from the third quarter of the twelfth century to the middle of the thirteenth. See Ana Deanović, “Romaničke freske u Sv. Krševanu” [“Romanesque Frescoes in St. Chrysogonus,”] *Peristil* 2 (1957), p. 118; Igor Fisković, “Zidno slikarstvo Radovanova doba u Dalmaciji” [“Wall Painting in Dalmatia at the Age of Radovan,”] in *Majstor Radovan i njegovo doba: zbornik radova međunarodnog znanstvenog skupa održanog u Trogiru 26–30. rujna 1990. Godine* [Master Radovan and his Age: Proceedings of the International Conference held in Trogir, June 26–30, 199], ed. Ivo Babić (Trogir, 1994), p. 204 (henceforth *Majstor Radovan*); Vojislav Đurić, *Vizantijske freske u Jugoslaviji* [Byzantine Frescoes in Yugoslavia], (Belgrade, 1975), pp. 187–188 (footnote 18).

attributes, the two saints on the left side have been interpreted as Cosmas and Damian (Fig. 23.10), whereas the figure preserved on the right is unidentified (Fig. 23.11). The final figure can be identified as John the Baptist based on the characteristic Latin inscription he holds (Fig. 23.12), the only part of the figure which remains intact.

The frescoes on the northern wall show fragments of three different representations in two registers. The only preserved scene in the upper register is the Nativity (Figs. 23.13–14), which was originally about four metres wide. In the lower register, an archangel is represented in a frontal position and yet another Deesis is painted above him (Figs. 23.15–17). To the left of this image there is a fragment depicting the figures of three bishops, preserved only from the waist down. The occurrence of the Deesis scenes and the overall iconographic solution of the Nativity reveal strong connections to Byzantine traditions. However, a closer examination of the frescoes shows modifications of Byzantine iconography. Although a certain degree of departure from the norm is usually present in provincial art, several details in the St. Chrysogonus fresco cycle stand in stark variance from what can be called the iconographic canon. The Nativity scene, for instance, presents several inconsistencies with Byzantine iconography. The first concerns the placement of Joseph quite close to the cave, rather than on the margins. His solitude seems to be suggested only by the gesture of his hand.²³ Furthermore, the clothing of the shepherds suggests a difference in status, which gives larger importance to the younger one. The most significant particularity, however, is the fact that Jesus is not placed in a masonry manger, but rather in a cradle, and a decorative one at that, emphasizing the glorification of the child rather than his martyrdom.²⁴

An extraordinary iconographic solution can be seen in the representation of the archangel in the register below the Nativity. The archangel, depicted to the waist in a frontal position, is portrayed with a characteristic braided hairstyle and is dressed, in accordance with Byzantine iconography, in two-layered, blue

23 Joseph's physical separation from Christ and Mary is no coincidence. A tradition in belief established according to the apocrypha suggests that Joseph was tempted by the devil to turn against Mary. His figure in the Nativity scene is of great importance, for it represents all of humankind and serves as a metaphor for doubting phenomena that are not in accordance with the laws of nature. See Vladimir Lossky, "Nativity of Christ," in *The Meaning of Icons*, ed. Leonid Aleksandrovich Ouspenski and Vladimir Lossky (Crestwood, 1982), p. 160.

24 The scene holds signs of the two natures of Christ as well as the idea of incarnation and the implications of Christ's death and resurrection. The cave is chosen as a setting as it alludes to the tomb, and Jesus is placed in a masonry manger which looks like an altar to remind viewers of his sacrifice: *ibid.*, pp. 157–160.

and red imperial attire.²⁵ His right hand is pointing upwards and in his left hand he is holding an orb. This clearly identifies the figure as Saint Michael, who is usually portrayed holding a *globus cruciger*, or in other cases holding a disc with a Christogram or an image of Christ Emanuel. In this scene, however, the disc is different: it depicts two male figures with halos accompanied by the inscription ET NVNC ANIMARUM on the inner left side of the medallion (Fig. 23.18). These are young, beardless characters with no specific attributes; they have bare feet and are dressed in simple single-layer draperies that reach their knees. Most likely they represent souls that are being weighed by Saint Michael in a symbolic representation of the Last Judgment.²⁶ This interpretation seems convincing not only artistically, but in an iconographic sense as well since the Last Judgment is dogmatically connected with the Deesis, which is represented above the Archangel.²⁷ The physical arrangement of these scenes in the church further suggests that they were linked; the limit of the register is interrupted and the image of Saint Michael is located in the middle of the borderline, thus breaking the border of the zone. It is impossible to determine the exact position of the fingers of the archangel's raised right hand, but the pose suggests that this is not a gesture of blessing, and it is possible that he was pointing at an inscription that is now lost. This would physically connect the two scenes that are theologically linked by the ideas of repentance, intercession, and salvation.²⁸ The choice of the northern wall for a symbolic representation of the Last Judgment is unusual, and it is possible that it was done according to a template which was copied and put in this place as a devotion image.²⁹

While there are no direct parallels to the representation of Saint Michael, an icon from the National Museum in Pisa sheds some light on the iconography. In this case the Archangel Michael holds a disc with the image of Christ Emmanuel, as well as a scale on which he, or rather Christ, is weighing the

25 Maria Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography 11th–15th cc.* (Leiden, 2003), pp. 45–46.

26 Đurić, *Vizantijske freske u Jugoslaviji*, pp. 187–188.

27 This is a rare, but not unique case of such framing. There are at least two other examples of it, however, both of them from Russian art (and both are related to the altar screen): Viktor Lazarev, *Istorija vizantijskoj živopisi* [*The History of Byzantine Painting*] (Moscow, 1986), p. 113.

28 Christopher Walter, "Two Notes on the Deesis," *Revue des études byzantines* 26 (1968), p. 318.

29 See Igor Fisković, "Zidno slikarstvo", p. 209. Fisković interprets the Deesis as a devotional image and links it to a donor separate from the rest of the cycle who might have been buried in the northern aisle.

souls. This may be considered a fusion of the western and the eastern manners of representing the Archangel Michael. It would appear that the same idea is taken one step further in the scene at the church of St. Chrysogonus, and that the western warrior type is weighing the souls, while the other elements of a Byzantine representation were retained.

The Complexity of the Apulian Area

Specific social and political circumstances in Apulia allowed Byzantine traditions to continue there for centuries after the end of the Byzantine rule. The overlapping of Greek and Latin culture was a crucial factor in the territory of the so-called Mezzogiorno, although cultural interconnections were formed in specific ways in each region. The entanglement of the two churches, supported by imperial figures, can be seen through a variety of sources, which attest to Latin bishops being placed in Orthodox sees and vice versa.³⁰ Due to the lack of textual sources, relationships between the laity are much more obscure. Recent scholarship, however, increasingly takes the view that these peoples not only lived side by side, but lived with each other in intermixed communities.³¹

The use of rock-cut churches in Apulia is still mysterious. Preserved inscriptions suggest that they were used by the laity.³² This is supported by evidence of agrarian activity often found around churches, and the existence of a so-called “common room,” where it is assumed that worshippers gathered. It needs to be noted that, while all three southern Italian regions which were part of the Byzantine Empire exhibit a large concentration of rock-cut churches, their usage by laymen is considered to be a particularly Apulian phenomenon. This stands in contrast to Basilicata and Calabria where such churches are ascribed to monastic communities. The theory of the so-called *civilizzazione rupestri* (“civilizations of the rocks”), defined by Cosimo Damiano Fonseca, according to which the churches are parts of isolated lay settlements that at some point

30 For more information on this phenomenon, see Graham Laud, *Latin Church in Norman Italy* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 494–520.

31 For more on this topic, see Linda Safran, *The Medieval Salento: Art and Identity in Southern Italy* (Philadelphia, 2014).

32 Linda Safran, “Public Textual Cultures: A Case Study in Southern Italy,” in *Textual Cultures of Medieval Italy*, ed. William Robins (Toronto, 2011), p. 121.

fled the cities, still carries weight in Italian scholarship.³³ The geography of the area, with a specific type of ravines with multitudes of caves, *does* allow such an interpretation. The sites would then be part of the *incastellamento*, the process of retreating from the cities into the countryside and either fortifying the village, or finding a suitable natural protection.³⁴ The inventory of these churches suggests that the liturgy was conducted in some of them, and judging by the presence of the iconostasis, their users were of the Orthodox rite, at least in the cases where the iconostasis does appear.³⁵ Yet it is dangerous to generalize about religious denominations. Judging by inscriptions, hagiography, and iconography, the patrons were Greek in some cases, and Latin in others, as were the artists who executed the frescoes.³⁶

The most problematic aspect of the *civilizzazione rupestri* theory is the assumption of complete isolation. If one accepts the idea that laymen settled in rock-cut villages, there is still no evidence to suggest that they lived segregated from the rest of the world. The existence of frescoes within the rock-churches suggests frequent interaction with the outside world, especially in cases where one deals with multiple layers of painting. Furthermore, the visual evidence that exists in built churches corresponds to the frescoes in rock cave churches both in iconography, and, in contemporaneous instances, in style. It is therefore logical to assume that the frescoes from rock-cut churches reflect the unpreserved art from the urban centres. Patricia Skinner states that there was a tight bond between the towns and rural areas.³⁷ By the end of the first millennium, a number of fortified villages on the Adriatic coast had developed into ports and frequently traded with the other side of the sea,³⁸ while their communication with the interior of the territory seemed to have been much

33 The idea that the users of the churches lived in the vicinity and in isolation is present in a number of Fonseca's publications. See especially Cosimo Damiano Fonseca, *Civiltà delle Grotte: Mezzogiorno rupestre* (Napoli, 1988); idem, "Vivere in grotta: lo spazio urbano alternative," in *Ambienti, mentalità e nuovi spazi umani tra Medioevo e età moderna*, ed. idem (Milan, 1987), pp. 127–184.

34 The process started to occur already in Late Antiquity, beginning in the fifth century and lasting throughout the Medieval period: Jean-Marie Martin, "Settlement and Agrarian Economy," in *The Society of Norman Italy*, ed. Graham Laud and Alex Metcalfe (Leiden, 2002), p. 28.

35 For more information about the inventory, see *Le chiese rupestri di Puglia e Basilicata*, ed. Franco dell'Aquila, and Aldo Messina (Bari, 1998), pp. 37–82, esp. at pp. 60–70).

36 Linda Safran, "Scoperte Salentine," *Estratto dalla rivista Arte Medievale* 2/7 (2008), p. 70.

37 Patricia Skinner, "Room for Tension: Urban Life in Apulia in the 11th and 12th Centuries," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 66 (1998), pp. 150–151.

38 Martin, "Settlement and Agrarian Economy," p. 28.

less vibrant.³⁹ How this type of activity reflected on art is a matter one can only judge through visual examples.

Comparisons between the fresco cycle of the church of St. Chrysogonus and the rock-cut churches – especially those of Santa Cecilia near Monopoli (province of Bari), San Lorenzo in Lamalungo near Fasano, and the church of unknown denomination in Lama D'Antico (province of Brindisi) – provide valuable visual evidence of a potential connection. While the technical aspects of the frescos clearly show them to be the work of different hands, they are nonetheless analogous in the treatment of their figures. Most strikingly, all of the churches contain a common trend, namely two groups of figures with a distinct set of facial expressions. The first group of figures are frontally placed saints. Well balanced and peaceful, they have a dose of softness in their expressions, while at the same time possessing an intellectual connotation (Figs. 23.20–26).⁴⁰ The second group contains figures with large noses, somewhat squinted eyes, and chubby faces (Figs. 23.27–30). Far from being intellectualized, these figures are simple and exhibit awkwardness in their poses. These figures mostly belong to narrative scenes, although there are some exceptions. The comparison of figures shows similarities in the solution of particular body parts and, in some cases, an amazing facial resemblance (Figs. 23.25–26).

It would be far-fetched to claim that these churches were the product of the same master or the same workshop as the church of St. Chrysogonus, however, the stylistic similarities allows one to date all four to the same period. The three Apulian churches were dated previously to the eleventh or the twelfth century,⁴¹ but have recently been re-dated, quite convincingly,⁴² to the second half of the thirteenth century.⁴³ The dating of the frescoes in St. Chrysogonus to the second half of the thirteen century would place them in the period shortly after intensifying the Apulian-Zaran relations as the consequence of Frederick II's policy.

39 Skinner, "Room for Tension," p. 153.

40 Olga Popova, "Drevnerusskaya zhivopis i Vizantia," in *Problemy Vizantijskogo iskusstva: Mozaiki, freski, ikony*, ed. Olga Popova (Moscow, 2006), p. 822–823.

41 For the dating of San Lorenzo, see M. Luisa Semeraro Herrmann and Raffaele Semeraro, *Arte Medioevale nelle lame di Fasano* (Fasano, 1996), p. 139. For the dating of Santa Cecilia, see Nino Lavermicocca, *Gli insediamenti rupestri del territorio di Monopoli* (Bari, 1977), p. 85.

42 Marina Falla Castelfranchi, "Quando abitavamo in grotta," in *Atti dei I. Convegno internazionale sulla civilita rupestre*, ed. Enrico Menesto (Spoleto, 2003), p. 126.

43 Except for Santa Cecilia, which was not part of the study. However, the dating of Santa Cecilia was proposed, according to stylistic similarities to the church of San Biago in San Vito Dei Normanni.

Monumental painting of Apulia has traditionally been defined as Byzantine, but it in fact exhibits a variety of features that are on the borderline of the eastern and the western traditions. This can be seen as a result of the physical remoteness of the region from Constantinople and its proximity to Rome, but is also largely a result of the specific socio-religious environment of the area. Studies in the hagiography of the region show that both eastern and western saints were venerated,⁴⁴ and one can often find depictions and inscriptions of both in the same church. Especially in the province of Salento, a place of extreme cultural interchange, one sees a variety of examples of the inter-denominational use of churches, as well as other public spaces. Epigraphic evidence shows that Jews, Latins, and Greeks not only lived in the same territory, but did so as part of the same community.⁴⁵ Although the province of Bari had a different demographic situation, the visual evidence from the rock churches seems to reflect the iconographic and stylistic patterns of Salento.⁴⁶ From the perspective of rock-cut churches, the area has been much less studied than the Salento province; however the churches examined herein do provide some clues as to how cultural interchange was reflected in art.

The inscriptions in the churches of Santa Cecilia, San Lorenzo, and Lama d'Antico are not extensive and certainly do not reveal crucial information about patrons. One thing, however, is significant: they are in two languages – Greek and Latin. It is hard to say to what extent the inscriptions are a reflection of the denomination of the patrons or of the artists, especially since Greek inscriptions prevail despite the fact that the Greek population was not in the majority. Nonetheless, in Lama d'Antico, the names of the bishops depicted in the blind arches are written in both Greek and Latin, and in cases such as this where it appears likely that people of both denominations were using the church.

Generally speaking, the rock-cut churches in southern Italy demonstrate a reoccurring pattern of Byzantine iconography: most rock cave churches with preserved painting have the Deesis scene depicted in the apse, providing that the church has an apse to begin with.⁴⁷ The scene often appears in the most usual iconographic manner with Christ between the Virgin and

44 Linda Safran, "The Art of Veneration: Saints and the Villages in the Salento and the Mani," in *Les Villages dans l'empire byzantine (4–15 siècle)*, ed. Cécile Morrisson, and Jean-Pierre Sodini (Paris, 2005), p. 182.

45 Linda Safran "Public Textual Cultures," p. 115.

46 Marina Falla Castelfranchi, "La decorazione pittorica delle chiese rupestri," in *Le chiese rupestri di Puglia e Basilicata*, ed. Franco Dell'Aquila and Aldo Messina (Bari, 1998), p. 129.

47 The church of Santa Cecilia near Monopoli, for instance, does not have an apse.

John the Baptist, although there are plenty of variations, including the Angel Deesis, the Great Deesis, and the replacement of the figure of John the Baptist with another saint (Figs. 23.23–25). Additionally, there are cases where both the Virgin and John the Baptist are replaced by other saints, such as in the one of San Marco near Fasano, where Christ is flanked by saints Cosmas and Damian.⁴⁸ The occurrence of two Deesis scenes has also been attested in Apulia, in the church of San Nicola in Casarotto. One Deesis is in the apse, and the other one is depicted on the lateral wall as an individual scene unrelated to the apse program. It has been argued that the latter has a devotional-funerary purpose,⁴⁹ just like the small Deesis with the archangel from Saint Chrysogonus,⁵⁰ although these two are not of the same Deesis type, as the one in San Nicola presents the figures in full size. One of the most unusual variants of the Deesis scene is found in Lama d'Antico, where Christ is depicted flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist, as well as being placed in a mandorla and surrounded by the symbols of the evangelists.⁵¹ In this way, the image is both a Byzantine Deesis and a western *Majestas Domini* (Fig. 23.32).

The icon from Pisa, brought into discussion as the parallel to the representation of the Archangel Michael from the church of St. Chrysogonus, likewise demonstrates a scene on a borderline between Greek and Latin traditions, one which is essentially the same as the case of the Deesis/*Majestas Domini* from Lama D'Antico. Furthermore, the idea of Saint Michael with a disc that does *not show what it is supposed to* may not have existing templates, but discs with figures can be found in other scenes. An example of this can again be seen in the church of San Biagio in San Vito Dei Normanni, where two figures in discs feature in the Annunciation scene (Fig. 23.33). They have been interpreted as prophets, and their appearance in the scene seems to fall beyond the usual iconographic cannon, which might suggest that they were placed there with some kind of devotional purpose.

48 See Falla Castelfranchi, "Quando abitavamo in grotta," p. 112. According to the scholar, this is not very unusual, but does not appear before the beginning of the thirteenth century, which is a *terminus post quem* for this church.

49 Falla Castelfranchi, "La decorazione pittorica delle chiese rupestri," p. 138.

50 See note 29.

51 To my knowledge, this representation finds no parallels in Italian examples. It presents, however, a standard type of composition in thirteenth century wall paintings of Cappadocia. For more information, see Catherine Jolivet-Lévy, "La Cappadoce après Jerphanion. Les monuments byzantins des X^e–XIII^e siècles," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen-Age*, 110/2 (1998), 899–930.

It has been argued that the absence of bishops in the apses of Apulian rock cave-churches, a feature which is also true for the other two regions, presents a peculiarity of the area compared to other territories with Byzantine traditions.⁵² While this is certainly the case, it remains unclear whether this represents a purposeful alteration of the canon. The apses in question are rather small and in order to depict the bishops the scale of the images would have to be seriously reduced. Furthermore, the apses of the rock cave churches are irregular, and it is often impossible to distinguish where the calotte stops and the register below starts. Finally, although the bishops are absent from the apse, they were most likely not omitted but depicted elsewhere – as one can see in the case of Lama d'Antico (Fig. 23.34). The same can be said of the church of St. Chrysogonus, where the saints depicted in the lower register of the northern apse are not bishops, and bishops appear instead on the northern wall. Although there are no clues that could help identify the three figures remaining from what was probably a much longer line, their placement on the northern wall of the church might represent a similar devotional idea as in Apulian churches.

Narrative scenes are frequently absent from the Apulian rock-cut churches cycles. Devotional images of saints, often supported by donor inscriptions, are the dominant theme. The absence of narrative scenes could be a product of the current state rather than a general principle, as most of the cycles are preserved only fragmentarily. The program of the church of San Biagio in San Vito Dei Normanni, which is the best preserved of all the rock-cut churches' cycles, depicts mostly narrative scenes, and might be a good illustration of this point. A rare example of the Nativity scene in rock-cut churches of Apulia comes from there, and it should be noted that it does not show parallels in iconographic particularities to the Nativity scene in St. Chrysogonus (comp. Figs. 23.13, 23.14 and 23.35 a–b). Joseph, for example, is not placed on the wrong side, nor is there anything unusual in the depiction of the shepherds (Fig. 23.35 a–b).⁵³ Instead it reveals some particularities of its own: namely, the absence of the choir of angels above the cave, and the fact that the angel leading the Magi is upside down.

52 Marina Falla Castelfranchi, "La decorazione pittorica delle chiese rupestri," p. 130.

53 The representation of baby Jesus has been completely destroyed so one cannot say anything about the way he was depicted.

Conclusion

Although there are no documented artistic transfers from Apulia to either Zadar or Dalmatia in general, it is the similarities of the artefacts found on different sides of the coast that should be observed as evidence of such transfers. If the iconographic particularities from the Nativity scene do not find direct parallels in the Apulian rock-cave churches, this can be ascribed to the fragmentary state of frescoes, but also to the state of research. The large body of frescoes from southern Italy, which remain relatively unknown, may provide substantial grounds for comparison at a later date.

The common features of the frescoes of St. Chrysogonus and the rock-cut churches in southern Italy provide a solid clue for the study of Zaran-Apulian relations in the Middle Ages, although the connection is blurred by the great differences in the socio-religious contexts of the two regions. The likeness of the material found in rock-cut churches of Apulia, and a church belonging to an urban monastery situated on the opposite side of the Adriatic coast, in fact opens up the question of the relationship between Apulian cities and rock-cut villages. At the very least we must reconsider the notion that these villages were isolated. The built churches in Apulia and their cycles suggest that it is not possible to make a clear distinction between the tendencies in monumental painting in the urban centres and those in rural areas. Therefore, although the frescoes in the church of St. Chrysogonus are comparable to those of Santa Cecilia near Monopoli, Lama d' Antico, and San Lorenzo near Fasano, they should not be brought into connection with these churches *per se*, but with the missing cycles from urban centres that these churches most likely reflect; products of urban centres which are in Apulia all situated on the coast and function as port-cities.

This problem exceeds the limits of this paper. The Apulian area, rich in visual evidence and understudied in its larger part, provides the possibility of broadening the comparative material, which may result in finding direct iconographic parallels to the ones in St. Chrysogonus. Moreover, other aspects such as pilgrimage, hagiography and epigraphy – should be taken into account to get a clearer image. However, the material provided in this paper makes a decisive step in studying cultural relations between Apulia and Zara, and contributes to a better understanding of artistic traditions on both sides of the Adriatic coast.



FIGURE 23.1 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar – view from the west.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.

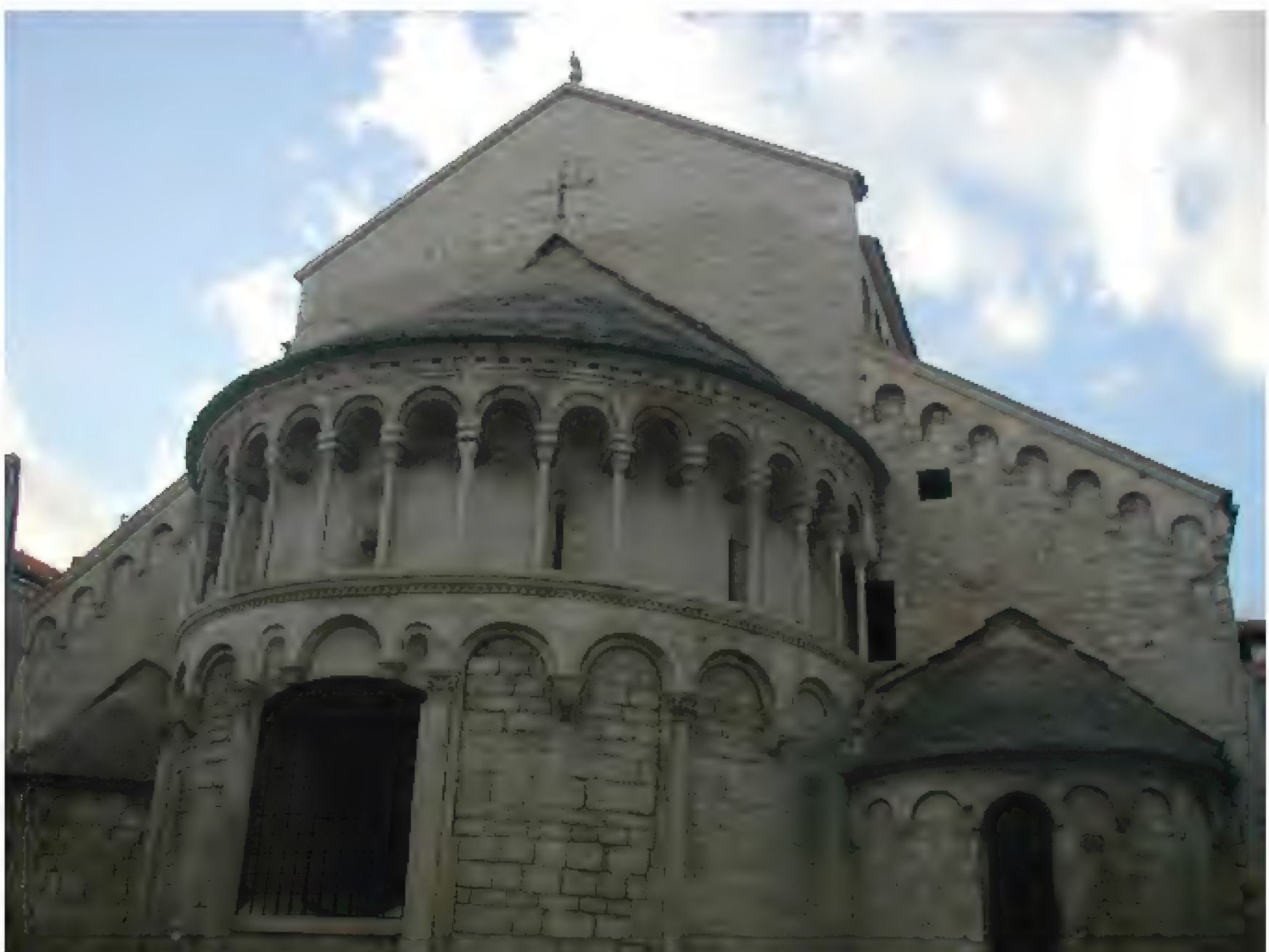


FIGURE 23.2 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.3 *San Nicola, Bari.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.4 *The cathedral of San Sabino, Bari.*
[HTTP://WWW.OUTLOOKTRAVELLER.COM/ARTICLE/INFREQUENTLY-VISITED-PUGLIA-1005492](http://www.outlooktraveller.com/article/infrequently-visited-puglia-1005492). LAST ACCESSED MAY 2014.



FIGURE 23.5 *The cathedral of Sant'Eustachio, Matera.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.6 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar – interior.*
[HTTP://WWW.PANORAMIO.COM/PHOTO/9012535.](http://www.panoramio.com/photo/9012535)
LAST ACCESSED MAY 2014.



FIGURE 23.7 *The cathedral of San Sabino, Bari – interior.*
LAST ACCESSED MAY 2014.



FIGURE 23.8 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar – view on the northern apse and the northern wall.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.9 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar – the northern apse calotte.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.10 *The row of saints in the northern apse, detail – Cosmas and Damien.*
PHOTOGRAPH PROPERTY OF THE CROATIAN CONSERVATION INSTITUTE.

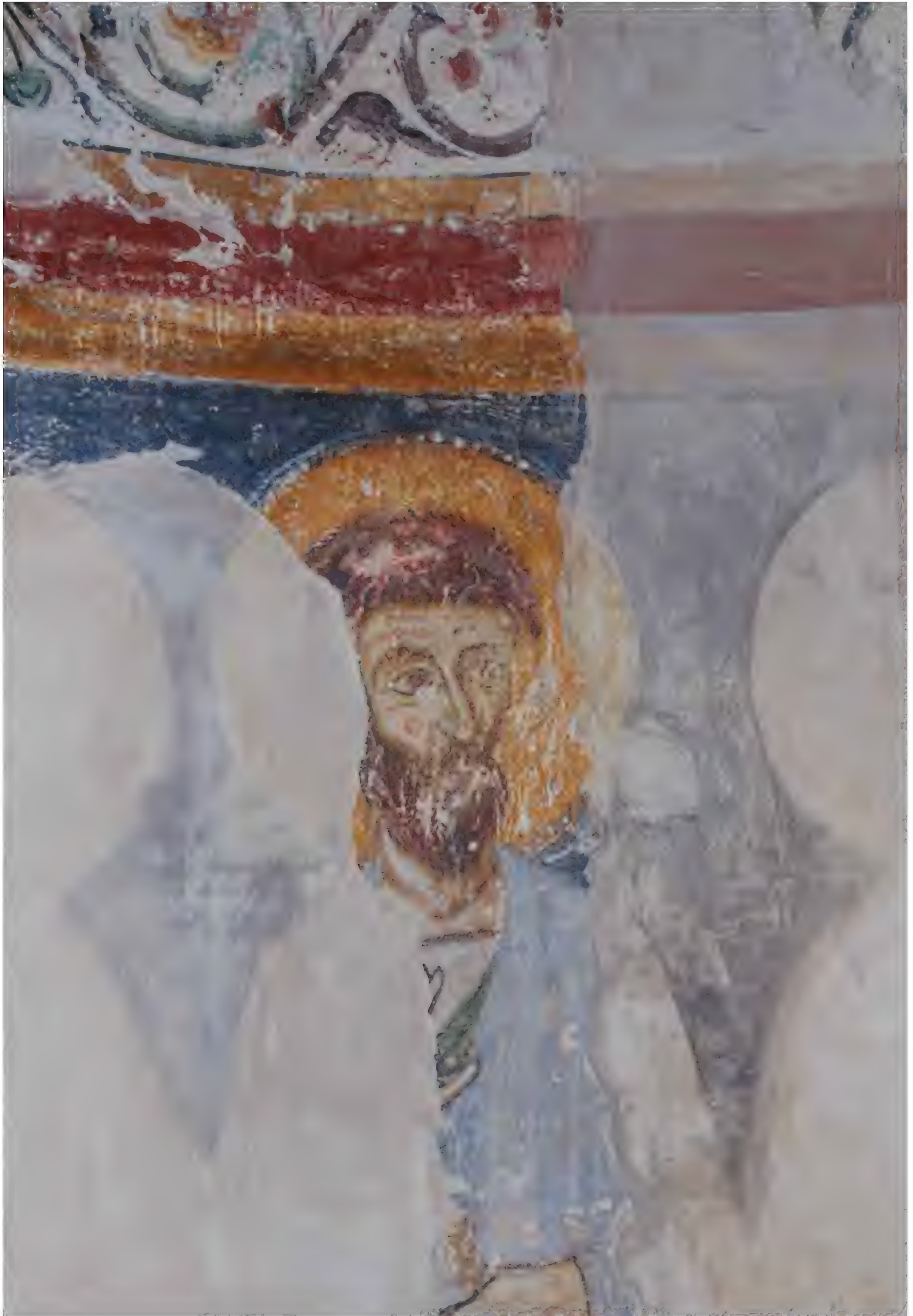


FIGURE 23.11 *The row of saints in the northern apse, detail – unidentified saint.*
PHOTOGRAPH PROPERTY OF THE CROATIAN CONSERVATION INSTITUTE.



FIGURE 23.12 *The row of saints in the northern apse, detail – inscription held by John the Baptist.*

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FIGURE 23.13 *The Nativity.*

PHOTOGRAPH PROPERTY OF THE ART-HISTORICAL INSTITUTE IN ZAGREB.



FIGURE 23.14 *Nativity, detail – the cradle with Christ.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY IVAN SRŠA.



FIGURE 23.15 *View on the northern wall – the archangel Michael, the Deesis and a part of the fragmented bishop scene.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.16 *The Small Deesis scene.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY IVAN SRŠA.



FIGURE 23.17 *The Archangel Michael.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.18 *The Archangel Michael, detail – characters in the orb.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.19 *Icon of St. Michael, Pisa, Museo Nazionale, Viktor Nikitich Lazarev, Istorija vizantijskoj živopisi [History of Byzantine Painting]. (Moscow, 1986).*



FIGURE 23.20 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar, detail.*



FIGURE 23.21
Lama d'Antico, detail.
 PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.22
The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar, detail.
 PHOTOGRAPH PROPERTY OF THE
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 INSTITUTE.



FIGURE 23.23 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar, detail.*

PHOTOGRAPH PROPERTY OF THE CROATIAN CONSERVATION INSTITUTE.



FIGURE 23.24 *The church of San Lorenzo, Fasano, detail.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.25 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar, detail.*

PHOTOGRAPH PROPERTY OF THE CROATIAN CONSERVATION INSTITUTE.



FIGURE 23.26 *Lama d'Antico, detail.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERTO ROTONDO.

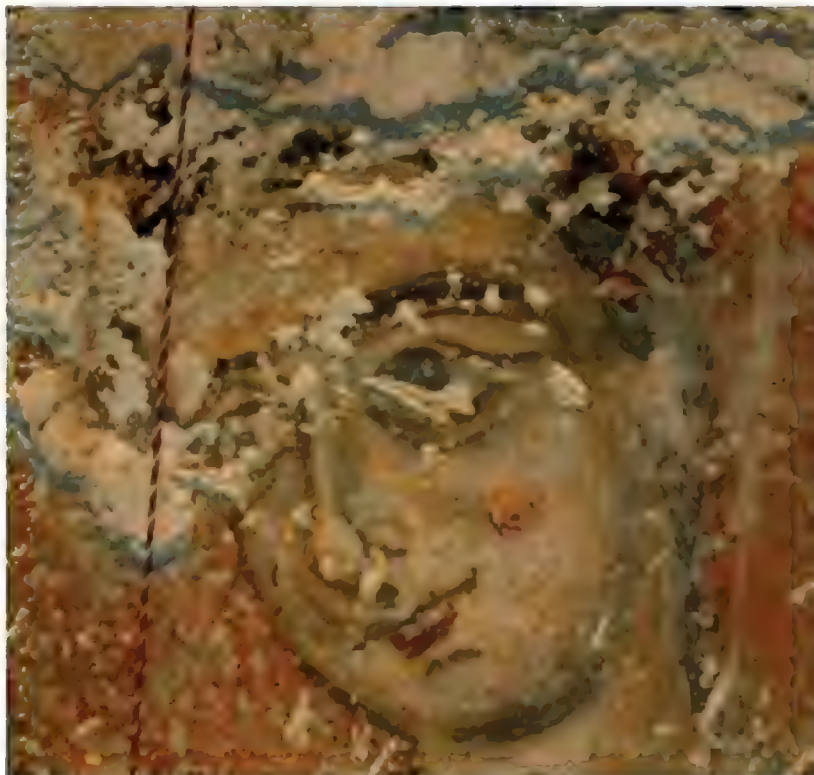


FIGURE 23.27
The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar, detail.
PHOTOGRAPH BY IVAN SRŠA.



FIGURE 23.28 *The church of St. Cecilia, detail.*
PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.



FIGURE 23.29 *The church of St. Chrysogonus, Zadar, detail.*



FIGURE 23.30 *Lama d'Antico, detail.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERTO ROTONDO.



a. San Matteo, Monopoli



b. San Nicola, Mottola



c. San Lorenzo, Fasano

PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR



d. San Zaccario, Monopoli

FIGURE 23.31 *Different solutions of the Deesis scene.*



FIGURE 23.32 *Lama d'Antico – the Deesis/Majestas Domini composition.*

[HTTP://WWW.LAMADANTICO.IT/IT/HOME/](http://www.lamadantico.it/it/home/). LAST ACCESSED MAY 2014.



FIGURE 23.33 *Nativity, detail with medallions of prophets, San Biagio, San Vito dei Normanni.*

PHOTO BY AUTHOR.

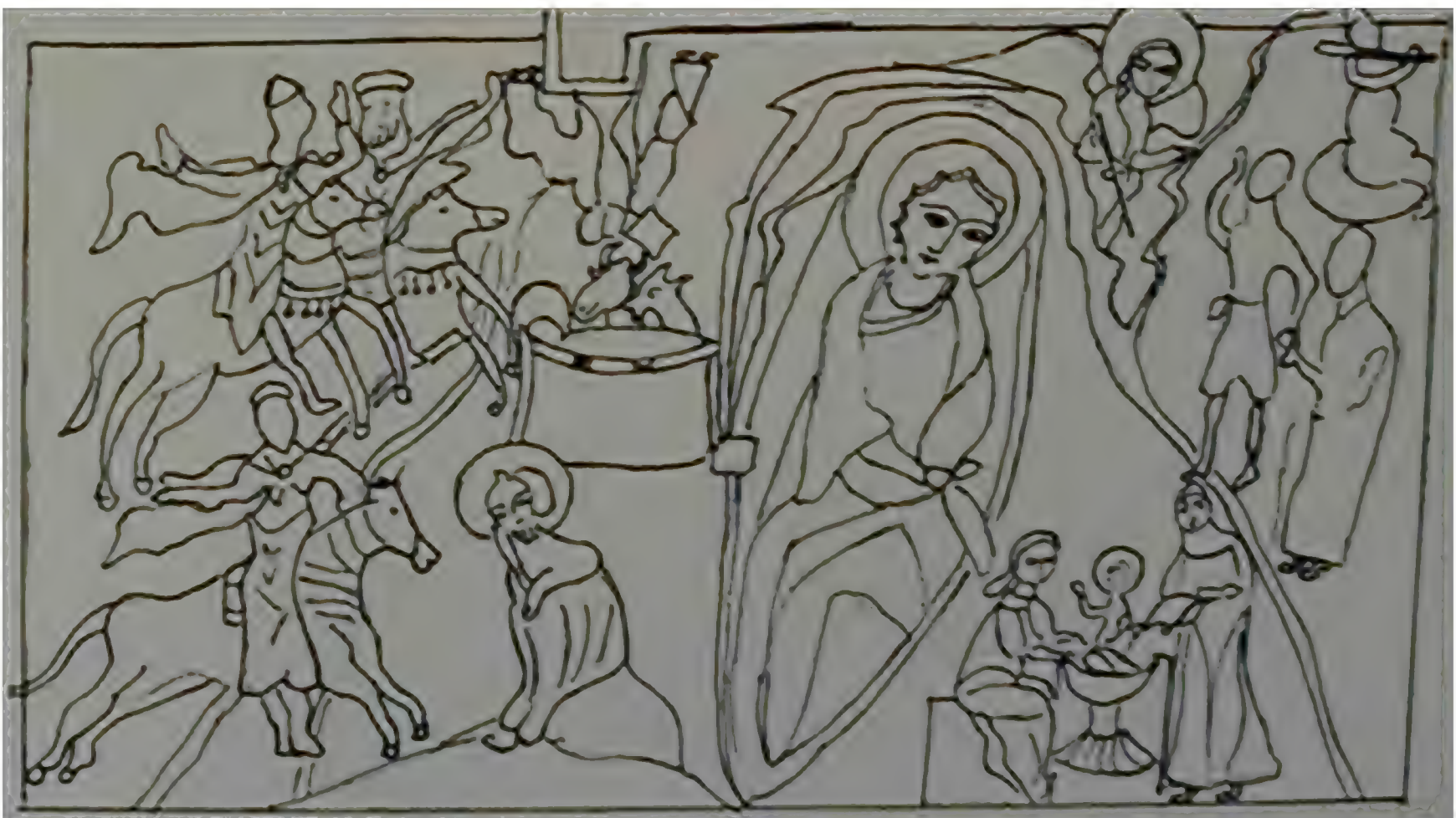


FIGURE 23.34 *Lama d'Antico – blind arches with bishops.*

[HTTP://WWW.LAMADANTICO.IT/IT/HOME/](http://www.lamadantico.it/it/home/). LAST ACCESSED MAY 2014.



a. Photograph by author.



b. Drawing, dell'Aquila, Franco, Messina, Aldo. *Le chiese rupestri di Puglia e Basilicata*, 56.

FIGURE 23.35 *Nativity, San Biagio, San Vito dei Normanni.*

Master of Kastamon, Emperor of Eternity: Ioannes Komnenos as Border-maker and Border-breaker in Theodoros Prodromos' poem 'On the advance to Kastamon'

Roman Shliakhtin

Introduction*

The Byzantine poet Theodoros Prodromos lived in the reign of Ioannes II Komnenos (r. 1118–1143). During this period, he was a court poet and wrote extensively about the emperor and his family, describing military triumphs, marriages, and deaths within the ruling family as well as the funerals that followed. His poems also describe several notable icons and, in a famous epigram, a particularly fine ceremonial sword that allegedly belonged to the general Alexios Kontostephanos and was dedicated to SS. Theodoros and Demetrios. This paper will focus on one of his panegyric poems, Poem IV in the Hörandner edition, dedicated to the capture of Kastamon in 1134.¹ As the title of the poem proclaimed, it was a declamation of the *dēmes* which was purportedly recited on the day Ioannes Komnenos entered the city after his capture of Kastamon.² This poem contains 290 lines of political verse. According to the editor, the poem can be found in four manuscripts (Parisinus 2831, Vat. Gr. 305, 306 and

* The author expresses his gratitude to Central European University for the generous support allowed him to begin the article, and Dumbarton Oaks' Research Library and Collection for the fellowship that allowed him to finish it. I also thank Angelina Volkoff and Nikolaos Zagklas for the suggestions and corrections to this article, and Nicholas Matheou for his assistance on all stages of the process.

- 1 Theodoros Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte*, ed. Wolfram Hörandner (Vienna, 1974), pp. 199–209. All quotes are based on this edition. For the sake of uniformity and simplicity, I use the title “On the capture of Kastamon” for Poem IV. For recent studies on Prodromos see the dissertation of Nikolaos Zagklas: Nikolaos Zagklas, “Theodoros Prodromos: Neglected Poems and Epigrams, Edition Translation and Commentary” (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 2014).
- 2 For the role of the *dēmes* in poems of Prodromos, see W. Hörandner, “*Einleitung*,” in *Historische Gedichte*, p. 78. See also the chapter on court poetry by Hörandner in the E. Jeffreys' volume on Rhetoric in Byzantium.

307). One of them, *Vat. Gr. 307*, includes works of Aristotle (*Physics*) with Themistios' paraphrase, Michael Psellos, excerpts from medical treatises, a poem of Konstantinos Akropolites as well as some other anonymous poems.

Kastamon, a Byzantine fortress in Paphlagonia, became one of the key points in the intense struggle between the Byzantine Empire and a band of Turks allied to the emirate of the Danishmendids.³ Scholars have traditionally used two narrative sources to reconstruct this struggle: the *Deeds of Ioannes and Manuel Komnenos* by Ioannes Kinnamos and the *Historia* of Niketas Choniates. Kinnamos wrote his work some 40 years after the conflict, while Choniates composed the first version of the *Historia* in the 1180s. Thus, the poem, with all its complexity and genre-specific fervour, is a contemporary and undeservedly forgotten source on the siege of Kastamon and the Byzantine expedition of 1134. It should be read alongside another poem on the same subject, which Hörandner placed under the number III in his volume.

The aim of the present paper is to reconstruct one particular aspect of this poetic cycle, namely the structure of Prodromos' imagined space. In Poem III, Theodoros Prodromos focused his attention on the siege and capture of Kastamon, putting the siege of the Anatolian city in a Trojan War context, including many quotations from the *Iliad*. At the same time, the poem (which might be useful for the military historian) does not provide abundant material to reconstruct imagined space in a wider sense. On the other hand, Poem IV with its focus on the campaign as a whole describes not only Kastamon, but also the wider universe that is to be conquered by the victorious armies of Ioannes Komnenos.

It is possible to distinguish three different levels of space that Prodromos articulated in his poem: the local level of Kastamon and other cities; the regional level of Anatolia, which the author calls "Persia"; and the universal level. First, I will investigate the main spatial landmarks of the poem to reconstruct the envisioned map of Theodoros Prodromos. Second, I will study the process of imperial expansion on all three levels (the capture of the city, the incursion into the country, the establishment of Byzantine power over the East). Third, I will investigate how Theodoros Prodromos depicted the process of imperial border-making with the fortification of the newly conquered "Persian land". Finally, I will try to understand how Prodromos inscribed both

3 For the long struggle over Kastamon, see relevant passages in the works of Speros Vryonis and Claud Cahen. The latter tried to use Prodromos' panegyric and inserted some indirect quotations from "On the capture of Kastamon" into his account: see Speros Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh Through the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles, 1971), p. 119; Claud Cahen, *Formation of Turkey: The Seldjukid Sultanate of Rum, Eleventh to Fourteenth Centuries* (London, 2001), pp. 19–20.

border-making and border-breaking into his glorification of the imperial expansion, and how this dichotomy influenced the Byzantine court discourse of the Komnenian era.

The Capture of Kastamon: Spatial and Ethnic Coordinates

Theodoros Prodromos based his imagined geography on the old tradition of Byzantine geographic perception, which in turn was based on ancient knowledge. Strabo could still have been a popular writer in the epoch of Ioannes Komnenos, and the works of Ptolemy were most probably read in the Komnenian era.⁴ The knowledge of space remained to a certain extent theoretical – there are no surviving Byzantine maps. As Anthony Kaldellis has pointed out, Byzantine political geography was in a sense a part of its imperial propaganda.⁵ The centre of the world and its “starting point” was Constantinople. The Byzantines saw the provinces of the west and the east in relation to their capital. Beyond these provinces lay the land of the barbarians. The barbarian land was separated from Byzantium by a border (ὄρος). In many cases, this border was a river: Anna Komnene mentioned that Alexios Komnenos made a peace treaty with the Turks of Suleiman ibn Koutlounish in 1081 that established the river Drakontes as a border.⁶

Theodoros Prodromos followed the main line of the Byzantine tradition in his depiction of “imagined space”. The centre of his space is the city of Constantinople, “New Rome”. This city is both a physical space with palaces and streets, and a symbol of the Roman state. According to Prodromos, the city itself “conquered Persians” and “subdued barbarians”. The author fixes his attention not on the internal geography of the empire, but on the lands beyond these borders, which become the objects of imperial expansion. In keeping with the earlier tradition, Theodoros Prodromos draws these borders along the rivers Istros, Sangaris, and Halys (the modern-day Danube, Sakarya,

4 See Oswald Dilke, “Cartography of Byzantine Empire,” in *The History of Cartography*, ed. John Brian Harley and David Woodward, 3 vols (Chicago, 1987), 1:266.

5 Anthony Kaldellis, *Ethnography After Antiquity. Foreign Lands and Peoples in Byzantine Literature* (Philadelphia, 2013), p. 34.

6 The Byzantine princess noted that the Turks of Suleiman promised not to cross the river: Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, ed. Athanasios Kambylis and Dieter Reinsch, 2 vols (Berlin, 2001), 3.11, 1:116, line 95. See also Peter Frankopan, *The First Crusade: The Call from the East* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012), p. 47; idem, “The Fall of Nicaea and the Towns of Western Asia Minor to the Turks in the Later 11th Century: The Curious Case of Nikephoros Melissenos,” *Byzantion* 76 (2006), 153–184.

and Kızılırmak respectively).⁷ These rivers “raise” their voice to note the victories of the protagonist. There are also other rivers: Prodnomos mentions the Tigris and the Nile, which usually go together, three times. The Byzantine poet also describes spaces at the very ends of his imagined *oikoumenē*, mentioning Tanais, Ultima Thule, and Hades a single time each. Besides these spatial marks, Theodoros Prodnomos introduces into his poem many *ethnē*, which inhabit the imagined space and are in different relations with the Byzantine Empire. Ioannes Komnenos waged war against the Persians (read Turks of Asia Minor), was paid obeisance from the Celts (Franks) and Scythians (probably Cumans), and received gifts from the “Children of Arabia”. Prodnomos also mentions “Galatians” once – perhaps another alternative ethnonym for the Turks of Ikonion. Apart from these more or less attributable *ethnē*, Prodnomos mentions “Western Ethiopians” and some mysterious barbarians who are “drinking from the Tigris and the Nile”.

Thus, the poet constructs a universe with a combination of several spatial systems. Constantinople is at the centre, with the basic direction of orientation being “East-West”. The border between “East” and “West” is the Bosphorus and probably the Nile: this system of division is inherited from Herodotus.⁸ The movement of the emperor “upwards” and “downwards” reminds one of the Byzantine geographer Cosmas Indicopleustes.⁹ The “political geography” is equally complex. There is one enemy *ethnos* (Persians), there are *ethnē* who are in complicated relations with Byzantine Empire (Celts, Galatians, Arabs), and, finally, there are peoples who are far out of the imperial reach (“those drinking from the Nile, those drinking from the Tigris”).¹⁰ In some ways, this political geography is similar to the picture in *De Administrando Imperio*. It also has some common features with an important piece of Komnenian ideology – the so-called *Muses* that were probably composed in the 1130s.¹¹ To sum up, Prodnomos constructed his space as a mosaic from tiles and pieces provided by the earlier tradition of Byzantine (imagined) geography.

7 Theodoros Prodnomos, “On the Capture of Kastamon”, lines 54–55: “Ἰστρος βοᾷ σου τὴν ἰσχύν, Σάγγαρις μέγα κράζει ὁμνυσὶν Ἄλυσ μὴ ἰδεῖν ἕτερον βασιλέα”.

8 See Francois Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of Other in Writing of History* (Berkeley, 1988), 15–17.

9 See Dilke, “Cartography,” 1:261–262.

10 Theodoros Prodnomos, “On the Capture of Kastamon,” lines 107–108: “φοβοῦ μοι, πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον, μὴ πάθῃς τὰ Περσίδος οἱ πίνοντες τοῦ Τίγρητος, οἱ πίνοντες τοῦ Νείλου...”

11 See Paul Maas, “Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 22 (1913), 348–369; Margaret Mullett, “Whose Muses? Two Advice Poems Attributed to Alexios I Komnenos”, in *La face cachée de la littérature Byzantine. Le texte en tant que message immédiat* (Paris: 2012), pp. 195–220.

Ioannes Komnenos as the Border-breaker

This imagined geography is the background to Ioannes Komnenos' victorious expedition into Anatolia. The Byzantine poet describes the expedition and the "border-breaking" that it entailed on three different levels: local, regional, and universal.

On the "local" level, as Prodromos stated, Ioannes Komnenos "captured many cities and took hold of many castles [...] so that the phalanxes of Romans crossed the Halys on their feet" (88).¹² Here, Prodromos alludes to the Bible, in which the army of Joshua crossed the Jordan on foot. The Byzantine court poet equates Ioannes Komnenos with Joshua and the Byzantine army with the host of Israelites. With the help of this reference, Prodromos presents the expedition of Ioannes Komnenos against the Seljuk Turks as a sanctified mission against the enemies of the Lord. One should also note that it was not impossible for this to have actually happened: the river Halys had a particular water cycle which meant that in some years the Byzantines and the Turks could actually cross it on foot, especially at fords. Historians of climate conditions state that there were several serious droughts in northern Asia Minor in the 1130s.¹³

In the next lines, Prodromos describes the fortress of Kastamon as "unvisited by birds, unreachable for projectiles". This background description is based on actual facts – the fortress of Kastamon is located on a high rock to the present day. Kastamon here is not only an object of capture, but also a treacherous woman: "the enemy mingled with you, [and] how you were mixed with barbarians" – states Prodromos.¹⁴ Here the poet again uses Biblical references: Kastamon was a part of the Holy Nation, but mixed with its enemies, who abused it. Ioannes Komnenos returned this unreachable fortress to the Romans, as if he were one of the militant kings of the Bible. The city itself is only a passive object: first for the barbarians, then for the border-crossing emperor.

On the "regional" level, the object of conquest was the land of the east, "Persia". Prodromos compares Ioannes Komnenos with the Lydian king

12 Theodoros Prodromos, "On the Capture of Kastamon," lines 88–89: "πόλις ἀλίσκεται πολλή καὶ φρούρια κρατεῖται καὶ φάλαγγες Ῥωμαϊκαὶ πεζεύουσι τὸν Ἄλυν [...]"

13 Ioannis Telelis, "Medieval Warm Period and the Beginning of the Little Ice Age in the Eastern Mediterranean. An Approach of Physical and Anthropogenic Evidence," *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* 7 (Vienna, 2000), pp. 232–233.

14 Theodoros Prodromos, "On the Capture of Kastamon," lines 114–115: "πῶς ἐκαρτέρησας, εἰπέ, τῆς Ῥώμης χωρισθῆναι καὶ συναφθῆναι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς, μιγῆναι τοῖς βαρβάροις".

Croesus. When Croesus crossed the river Halys, he followed the false words of an oracle and put his kingdom to ruin; when Ioannes Komnenos crossed the river, he ruined the “power of the Persians” with the assistance of his heavenly patron – the Theotokos.¹⁵ The river again acts as a border between Byzantium and “Persia”, and this frontier in some sense changes the narrative. The expedition of Ioannes Komnenos is not only against the “adulterous” Kastamon, the aim of the emperor is conquest. Thus, Prodromos was the first Byzantine writer to recognize, as early as the 1130s and for the sake of a panegyric, the loss of Paphlagonia to the Turkic conglomerates. The Byzantine poet turned Paphlagonia into “Persia” without any sense of nostalgia, whether about imperial might or family history: the Komnenoi came to Constantinople from Paphlagonia. The absence of any kind of allusion to the family’s origins is particularly interesting when compared to the *Materials for a History* of Nikephoros Bryennios, who in the 1130s emphasised the connections between the Komnenoi and Paphlagonia.

In his poem, Prodromos introduces the new “Persia” in terms that are not particularly sympathetic: “murder, robbery and mother of uncountable bad things” (142).¹⁶ The poet states that Kastamon and the other cities that Ioannes captured in his expedition were “children in a mother’s womb”. However, he does not mention an imagined capital of Persia or make any other spatial references. It is simply the land of the enemy, the land on the other side of the border, which Ioannes Komnenos turned into his hunting-land. The image of the emperor as a border-hunter probably has some connection with another hunter in Byzantine literature, *Digenis Akritas*: the Grottaferrata version of this epic was probably composed in the reign of Ioannes Komnenos.¹⁷ Ioannes Komnenos is not only a hunter. He is a sun-like shining master of the east. Prodromos compares him three times to the sun and advises the Persians to

15 I would like to thank Max Lau for pointing out the importance of the Theotokos in this episode.

16 Angeliki Papageorgiou wrote an article about some aspects of the image of savage inhabitants of Persia in the poems of Theodoros Prodromos. As far as I know, this is the only article on the image of the Turks in Prodromos in modern scholarship: Angeliki Papageorgiou, “And the ‘Wolves Like Turks’: *The Image of the Turks in the Reign of John II (1118–1143)*,” *Byzantinoslavica* 69/1 (2011), 149–161. There is no mention in the article of Wolfram Hörandner, “Das Bild des Anderen: Lateiner und Barbaren in der Sicht der byzantinischen Hofpoesie,” *Byzantinoslavica* 54 (1993), 162–168.

17 Paul Magdalino defines terminus post quem for Grottaferrata version as 1137: Paul Magdalino, “Digenis Akrites and Byzantine Literature: The Twelfth-century Background for Grottaferrata Version,” in *Digenis Akrites: New Approaches to Byzantine Literature*, ed. Roderick Beaton and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot, 1993), p. 8.

“run farther than Gadir, to swim farther than Ultima Tule” (197), where both places stand for “ends of the earth”. Prodomos here refers to an important component of the Byzantine image of the Turks – their incredible speed.¹⁸ In the next line, the poet suggests that they should hide in Tartaros – only there (in the absence of the sun) can Persians hide from the omnipotent emperor. Thus, the power of the Komnenian emperor stretches through all the *oikoumenē*, as Prodomos describes the empire.

The Byzantine victory over the Persians affects other *ethnē* in the universe of the poem. Prodomos states that all people should tremble before the victorious emperor:

Oh be afraid, barbarians, not only those of Persia who might suffer | (But) those drinking from the Tigris and those drinking from the Nile | You, western Ethiopians, you, dwelling near sunrise, | You, from the northern climes, and you, from the southern ones (110)¹⁹

Prodomos depicts Ioannes Komnenos not only as the emperor of Byzantium, but as the emperor of East, West, North, and South. The Byzantine emperor is like the sun, and this comparison is not only spatial, but temporal. The emperor will not die, but will rule forever: “The cloud will not cover you and you do not know the sunset” notes Prodomos in the final lines of his poem. Thus, Ioannes Komnenos breaks not only the borders of space, but the borders of time as well.

Ioannes Komnenos as the Border-maker

Border-making is present in the text of the poem on a more subtle level – a level of certain words and phrases, and especially of the choice of words. One can trace border-making on two levels out of three, namely on the local and the regional ones. Prodomos mentions border-making when he describes “conquered cities” and “fortified places”. At first glance, the description of

18 I hope to address this question in my dissertation. For the general features of the “Byzantine Nomads,” see Hélène Ahrweiler, “Byzantine Concepts of the Foreigner: The Case of the Nomads,” in *Studies of the International Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Hélène Ahrweiler and Angeliki E. Laiou (Washington, D.C., 1998), p. 11.

19 Theodoros Prodomos, “On the Capture of Kastamon,” lines 106–110: “φοβοῦ μοι, πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον, μὴ πάθῃς τὰ Περσίδος, οἱ πίνοντες τοῦ Τίγρητος, οἱ πίνοντες τοῦ Νείλου, οἱ πρὸς δυσμὰς Αἰθίοπες, οἱ πρὸς αὐγὰς ἡλίου, οἱ τοῦ βορείου κλίματος, οἱ τοῦ νοτιωτέρου.”

conquest does not provide any evidence for the making of borders, but in one passage Prodrornos subtly undermines his own “expansion narrative”. He states that the Byzantine emperor has to guard his conquests: “Oh you victorious autocrator of Ausonians | You turn the destroying and corrupting wolves of the state | Into the guard-dogs of the state (178)”²⁰ According to Prodrornos, the newly-conquered “Persian” cities had to be guarded against enemies, and so Ioannes turned the wolf-like Turks into guard-dogs of the state, here understood as a community of citizens (πολιτεία). The phrase also implies a comparison of the Byzantine State with a flock of sheep that is present in Prodrornos’ other poems.²¹

The Byzantine panegyrist also describes border-making on a regional level. This comes at the end of the poem, when he lists the results of Ioannes Komnenos’ successful expedition against the Persians:

Oh Rome, happy city, you count new divisions, | All country up to the Halys, then the region around the Halys | And besides that the despoiled country beyond the Halys (263)²²

The word used for “country” (σχοίνις) is the same word that Prodrornos uses at the beginning of the poem to describe the region of Constantinople. The meaning here is “a portion, a measured piece of land”. Prodrornos marks the region beyond the Halys as “despoiled”, becoming, after a fashion, the new border zone between the Byzantines and the Persians, a new border of the region made by Ioannes Komnenos.

Thus, Theodoros Prodrornos mentions border-making in the poem on two different levels. On the local level, border-making is associated with cities which are listed at the end of the poem. On the regional level it is associated with certain areas of captured Persia. However, border-making is completely absent on the third level in the poem – on the universal level. In some sense this is logical, prior to imperial invasion there is no need to mention a border.

20 Theodoros Prodrornos, “On the Capture of Kastamon,” line 170: “ὦ βασιλεῦ τρισαριστεῦ Αὐσόνων αὐτοκράτορ... τοὺς λυμεῶνας καὶ φθορεῖς τῆς πολιτείας λύκους κύνας δεικνύεις φύλακας αὐτῆς τῆς πολιτείας.”

21 See reference to “sheep and wolves” inhabiting the same space in the poem on Lopadion. I thank Fabio Pagani for the hint to this comparison Theodoros Prodrornos, *Historische Gedichte*, p. 305, line 84.

22 Theodoros Prodrornos, “On the capture of Kastamon,” lines 261–263: “Ἀρίθμει σου τοῖς σχοινομοῖς, εὐτυχεστάτῃ Ῥώμῃ, πάντα τὰ μέχρῃς Ἄλυσος, ὅλον αὐτὸν τὸν Ἄλυν, τὴν ἀντιπέραν Ἄλυσος ἐσκυλευμένην χώραν.”

Border-making and Border-breaking in the Context of a Panegyric to Imperial Expansion

In his poem, Prodromos combines Classical and Biblical allusions, literally renaming and re-baptizing significant parts of the Byzantine universe for the glorification of his hero. A prominent court poet constructed a complex apologia for imperial expansion in the east, which had hardly any analogues in the previous era.²³ In his apologia, Prodromos describes both border-making and border-breaking as parts of the same process of imperial conquest. In “On the capture of Kastamon”, this process works on two levels: the local and the regional. First, the emperor attacks Kastamon and other cities, placing his guardians there. Secondly, Ioannes Komnenos invades “Persia”, captures the regions of the Halys, and adds new lands to the empire.

The situation with the third, universal level is more complex. On the one hand, Prodromos praises Ioannes Komnenos as a sun-like emperor, whose enemies should hide as far as Tartarus and tremble. On the other hand, the author introduces this wish with special toponyms – Ulitma Thule, and Gadeira, which stand for “far, far away”. Only in the very final lines of his poem, Prodromos suggests how conquest on the universal level can be accomplished: “You will put bridges over the Tigris, you will change the waters of the Nile (288)”²⁴ The court poet wishes Ioannes Komnenos to cross many rivers like the Tigris and to break all possible borders. In her article on “open and closed space” in Kekaumenos and *Digenis Akritas*, Catia Galatariotou noted the difference between perceptions of space in the Byzantine literary works of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.²⁵ The perception of space in *Consilia et Narrationes* is shown to be “closed” while the space of *Digenis Akrites* is in some sense

23 It is important to note here that Prodromos was not the only poet in the field. Nikolaos Kallikles, court doctor of Alexios I Komnenos was also a poet active in the reign of Ioannes. However, his status was different from that of Prodromos. He wrote epitaphs and inscriptions to the icons and epitaphs, including here one that was supposedly ordered by Ioannes Komnenos for himself. He mentioned imperial expansion in the East on several occasions, but never in the way which Prodromos used in his lengthy pieces of poetry. More than that, Callicles probably was not the main court poet and (according to his editor) did not compose laudatory poems dedicated to imperial triumphs. I thank Paul Magdalino who helped me to figure out this important moment. For the edition, see Nikolaos Kallikles, *Carmi*, ed. Roberto Romano (Naples, 1980).

24 Theodoros Prodromos, “On the Capture of Kastamon,” line 288: “καὶ γεφυρώσαις Τίγρητας καὶ μεταβάψαις Νείλους.”

25 Catia Galatariotou, “Open Space/Closed Space: The Perceived Worlds of Kekaumenos and Digenes Akrites,” in *Alexios I Komnenos. Papers on the Second Belfast Byzantine*

more open. Prodromos is in a way more specific: he constructs his universe not only as an open space, but as a space wide open for Byzantine expansion. Prodromos presents the capture of Kastamon and the crossing of Halys as two steps towards the total conquest of all possible barbarians around the borders and all the way to the ends of the world.

The expansionist propaganda of Theodoros Prodromos, and his imperial patron, had a long-lasting effect. Anna Komnene in the *Alexiad* used different means to support the idea of conquest of the *oikoumenē* and connected it with the idea of the restoration of the Roman Empire's former glory. She had a complex relationship with her brother Ioannes, who secured for Anna a comfortable confinement in a monastery, but she supported the idea of imperial expansion.²⁶ In other words, the Byzantine princess never questioned the importance of total conquest that continued during her lifetime.

After the death of Ioannes Komnenos, the realization of a universal conquest even in the imagined space became more and more elusive. Manuel Komnenos preferred symbolical submission to military conquest.²⁷ However, the poems of Prodromos influenced later generations of the Byzantine *literati*. The imperial secretary Ioannes Kinnamos in his *Deeds of Ioannes and Manuel Komnenos* described Manuel as a military conqueror. However, this conquest was of a different kind: Kinnamos described Manuel as a brave warrior, not as a conqueror of new lands or cities. Some years after Kinnamos, another Byzantine intellectual, Niketas Choniates, created his narrative about the same period. He was not a panegyrist, but a master of subtle *psogos* who incorporated in his work many critical pieces about Manuel Komnenos and his personal bravery, which cost the empire so many lives. Despite all the differences in their attitudes to Manuel, Ioannes Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates both imagined Ioannes Komnenos as an ideal, or at least semi-ideal emperor. Choniates and Kinnamos longed for the era when the Byzantine Empire was powerful and strong – if only in panegyrics.

International Colloquium, ed. Margaret Mullett and Dyon Smythe (Belfast, 1989), pp. 303–328.

26 For the critic against Manuel, see Paul Magdalino, "The *Pen* of the *Aunt*: Echoes of the Mid-twelfth Century in the *Alexiad*," in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Ghouma-Peterson (London, 2001), pp. 15–43.

27 For the analysis of important rituals, see Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 69.

‘Ioannoupolis’: Lopadion as ‘City’ and Military Headquarters under Emperor Ioannes II Komnenos

Maximilian Lau

Lopadion is to be found on the banks of the river Ryndakos. It corresponds to the modern village of Uluabad on the Mustafakemalpaşa, and lies on the main road to the west of Bursa. It has not gone unnoticed by historians of the Komnenian era: John Haldon’s work on the Byzantine military and John Birkenmeier’s study on the development of the Komnenian Army interpret its role as being in the tradition of the *aplekta*, or supply camps mentioned in the military manuals of the tenth century.¹ Angeliki Papageorgiou has agreed with this in her doctoral thesis on Ioannes II Komnenos, and takes it as an example of the emperor’s focus on a strong army in his reign.² Through the eyes of Theodoros Prodromos and the court of Ioannes, and indeed studying its ruins in the modern day, it can however be interpreted as a site much more important than either a supply camp, or an expression of the emperor’s martial nature. The purpose of this paper is thus to understand what Lopadion represented and what functions it served to contemporaries: why such a fortification was built in that place and at that time, and how it was perceived in the rhetoric of political discourse, in the light of both the textual and the archaeological evidence that have not been included in previous interpretations.

Ferdinand Chalandon’s *Les Comnènes* first associated Lopadion with Ioannes II Komnenos, correlating Mikail the Syrian’s mention that Ioannes built a “town on the coast” in 1130, with Ioannes Kinnamos’ note that Lopadion was “newly constructed” during his reign.³ This interpretation presents an

¹ John F. Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565–1204* (London, 1999), p. 151; John W. Birkenmeier, *The Development of the Komnenian Army: 1081–1180* (Leiden, 2002), p. 150. See also “The Anonymous Byzantine Treatise on Strategy,” trans. George T. Dennis, in *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington D.C., 1985), in particular chapter 9.

² Angeliki Papageorgiou, “Conclusions on John II Komnenos and his Era” (unpublished PhD diss., University of Athens, 2010), pp. 4–5. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/216234928_John_II_Komnenos_and_his_era_%281118-1143%29.

³ See *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, ed. and trans. Jean-Baptiste Chabot, 4 vols (Paris, 1899–1910), vol. 4, p. 230; Ferdinand Chalandon, *Jean II Comnène (1118–1143), et Manuel I Comnène (1143–1180)* [Paris, 1912 (repr. New York, 1971)], 1:83. The text in Greek is “ἐκ καινῆς ἀνωκοδομήθη”:

immediate historiographical problem however – Lopadion has a far longer settlement history than that of a site founded by Ioannes. The first part of this paper will therefore track this history, and then with that knowledge put forward a solution to this problem.

Lopadion is first mentioned in textual sources in the early-ninth century letters of Theodoros Stoudites as the site of a *xenodocheion* (hostel), which was built next to a strategic bridge over the River Ryndakos.⁴ This bridge was built sometime after 258, when the Scythians found the river impossible to cross when swollen with rain, and so had to go all around Lake Uluabat, classically known as Lake Apolloniatis; thus we can establish a *terminus post* and *ante quem* for the site's foundation between these two dates.⁵ The remains of this bridge are still extant, and show signs of repair with a diagonal line in the masonry, possibly caused by an earthquake (Figs. 25.1 and 25.2). Whether this damage was caused by an unknown earlier earthquake, or was due to the 1327 earthquake that caused the walls to weaken and facilitated the Ottomans conquest of Lopadion, this repair shows the strategic importance of the site. In addition to merely crossing the Ryndakos here, the river itself connected Lopadion to the Sea of Marmara and thence to Constantinople and the wider world. The tenth-century Arab geographer Al-Mas'udi mentioned it as one of the main places for Muslims to pass on the way to Constantinople in earlier centuries, and the eighteenth-century Italian traveller Domenico Sestini mentions how it was navigable to this point in his day, as boats regularly went from there to Constantinople and back. Thus throughout the site's history it had enviable connectivity with the wider world by both sea and land.⁶

The sigillographic evidence provided by five seals suggest that this was a settlement that grew slowly over the centuries, and though these seals represent serendipitous finds that may distort any analysis, their existence at the very least once again refutes the possibility of Lopadion being a new

see John Kinnamos, *Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum* [sic] *Comnenis gestarum*, ed. Augustus Meineke (Bonn, 1836), p. 38; Ioannes Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, trans. Charles M. Brand (New York, 1976), p. 38.

4 See "Lopadion," *Oxford Dictionary Of Byzantium Vol 2*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan et al. (Oxford, 1991), pp. 1250–1; Theodoros the Studite, *Theodori Studitae Epistulae*, ed. Georgios Fatouros, 2 vols (Berlin, 1992), Letter 137, 2:220, translation in 1:228.

5 Zosimus, *Zosimi comitis et exadvocati fisci historia nova*, ed. Ludwig Mendelssohn (Leipzig, 1887), p. 34; referenced and commented upon by W. M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (New York, 1972), p. 160.

6 Dominico Sestini, *Viaggio da Costantinopoli a Bukoresti, fatto l'anno 1779. Con l'aggiunta di diverse lettere* (Rome, 1794), p. 83; André Miquel, *La géographie humaine du monde musulman jusqu'au milieu du 11^e siècle 2: Les travaux et les jours* (Paris, 1988), pp. 413–417.

settlement under Ioannes. The first two seals from the ninth century bear the names of Theognostos and Georgios and the title of *xenodochos* respectively, which predate a certain seal of Basileios, which bears that of both *xenodochos* and imperial *spatharios* in a seal of late-ninth or early-tenth century origin.⁷ From the same period we also have a seal of Pothetos, a *kommerkiarios* of Lopadion, the presence of whom suggests that the site had become an important port for bringing in goods to the region, such that an official in charge of collecting the *kommerkion* tax on these goods in addition to other trade responsibilities was in office there. An eleventh-century seal of an *archon* of Lopadion called Leon also attests to the port's growing importance.⁸ This has led Ioannes Dimitroukas to posit that Lopadion was one of the major intermediate stations for merchandise moving on to the capital during the eleventh century – indeed its role as a centre for trade as well as travel and strategic utility is also attested in the twelfth century as the French and German contingents of the Second Crusade met here to use the market before following the main road into Phrygia.⁹ Its loss was keenly felt when the bridge was finally destroyed in the fifteenth century, as it was noted by the late Byzantine historian Doukas how the Turks had to march for three days to travel around lake Uluabad – much as the Scythians had done 1300 years before – and the fact that the modern road bridge is only a few hundred metres downstream underlines its utility even today.¹⁰

The picture unfolding here is that this was a major regional crossroads for trade and travel, growing from the ninth to twelfth centuries as the benefits of both the river and the bridge were recognised. There is thus no way that Lopadion was “newly constructed” during the reign of Ioannes; indeed, it is

7 *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and at the Fogg Museum of Art Volume 3 West, Northwestern and Central Asia Minor and the Orient*, ed. John Nesbitt and Nicolas Oikonomides (Washington D.C., 1996), Seals 55.3, 55.4 and 55.5 respectively, pp. 101–2. Georgios is also the name of an otherwise unidentified *Xenodochos* addressed in another letter from Theodore the Studite, causing Fatouros to suggest that these two letters and the seal are in reference to the same individual: *Theodori Studitae Epistulae*, Letters 102 and 137, 2:220, 2:254, translation in 1:228, 1:245.

8 Ibid. Seals 55.1 and 55.2, p. 101. For definitions of the titles of the Kommerkiarios and an Archon, see “Archon,” *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Vol 1*, p. 160, and “Kommerkiarios” and “Kommerkion,” *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Vol 2*, pp. 1141–2.

9 Ioannes Dimitroukas, *Reisen und Verkehr im Byzantinischen Reich vom Anfang des 6. bis zur Mitte des 11. Jh.s* (Athens, 1997), pp. 380–381, 389–390, 568–569; Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, ed. and trans. Virginia G. Berry (New York, 1948), p. 102.

10 Michael Ducas, *Historia Byzantina*, in *Patrologia Graeca* 158, ed. Jean-Paul Migne (Paris, 1866), pp. 85 and 168.

also mentioned in the *Alexiad* as a rendezvous point where Emperor Alexios I Komnenos gathered troops for his own Anatolian campaigns.¹¹ Kinnamos' and Mikail the Syrian's comment must, therefore, only refer to the fortifications that can still be seen on the site today, rather than the whole settlement as they imply, but this too resists firm dating.

Foss and Winfield's study on Byzantine fortifications have identified other fortifications on the coast which Mikail the Syrian could have been referring to instead of Lopadion. Although the Ryndakos was navigable between the sea and Lopadion, it is hardly on the coast compared to Ioannes' fortresses of Anaia near Ephesus on the Aegean, or Pegae (classical Priapus) on the Sea of Marmara, which are on the coast itself rather than on a river.¹² Mikail the Syrian could therefore be referring to either of these sites when he notes building work done in 1130, or indeed another, still unknown site, meaning we cannot take his comment as an exact date for the building of the fortifications at Lopadion. Its first mention in a narrative history by Kinnamos was as the place where Ioannes spent the winter of 1135, between his two assaults on Gangra in Paphlagonia, thus providing us with a *terminus ante quem* for its construction.¹³ From this time on, Lopadion became Ioannes' forward base of operations in the Ryndakos region, as the emperor kept his army there after his first Cilicia expedition in 1139, despite the "unspeakable hatred" this aroused in his troops who had not been home in over three years.¹⁴ He remained at Lopadion during the course of the following year, coordinating defences against Turkish raids that had increased while he had been away in the east. He then used the location as a place to gather his forces for a Pontic campaign against the rebel

11 Anna Comnena, *Alexiade (Règne de l'empereur Alexis I Comnène 1081–1118)*, ed. and trans. in French Barnard Leib, 2nd ed., 4 vols (Paris, 1967), Vols I and III, (Paris, 1967), Vol. 1: Book 6, p. 75, Vol. 3: Book 14, pp. 165, 188, 190.

12 Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, "Mittelalterliche Befestigungen im südlichen Ionien," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 11 (1961), p. 70; Clive Foss and David Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications An Introduction* (Pretoria, 1986), pp. 154–155; William Aylward, "The Byzantine Fortifications at Pegae (Priapus) on the Sea of Marmara," *Studia Troica* 16 (2006), 179–203; Another alternative could be that of Iasos in Caria, which was also an older settlement with new fortifications built in the twelfth century, as discussed in the study by Michele Cornieti, "Fortificazioni Urbane di Frontiera in Asia Minore: Le Difese di Iasos di Caria in Età Bizantina," in *La Transgiordania nei secoli XII–XIII e le 'frontiere' del Mediterraneo medievale*, ed. Guido Vannini and Michele Nucciotti (Oxford, 2012), pp. 449–457.

13 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, p. 15; *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, p. 21.

14 Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. Jan Louis van Dieten (Berlin, 1975), 33; trans. Harry J. Magoulas, *O City of Byzantium* (Detroit, 1984), p. 19.

Konstantinos Gabras of Trebizond in 1140.¹⁵ Following this campaign, Lopadion was again Ioannes' base in 1141 against renewed Turkish raiding, when he once more had to "gird his sword" rather than rest.¹⁶ Manuel too used Lopadion at the start of his reign in similar circumstances, which strongly suggests that this site played an important strategic role in Byzantine military operations in Asia Minor in the mid-twelfth century.¹⁷

Having assessed Lopadion's important military role in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, together with that of its growing commercial and transportation role in the centuries prior, it is perhaps surprising that when reading Clive Foss' study on Byzantine fortifications he and David Winfield call it merely a "fortified camp."¹⁸ When assessing the ruins, the first thing that strikes the viewer is the size of the site, covering most of the modern farm at 10 hectares. Foss' pre-1986 photograph (Fig. 25.3) shows imposing towers, which in 2013 were still in good condition (Fig. 25.4), and should give any visitor, medieval or modern, the impression that the site may hold more importance than the location of a supply dump, or small fort at a rendezvous site. Most of the site is seen to be in a similarly good condition, though the sheep pen built up against much of the southern wall obscures a full photographic study (Fig. 25.5), and prevents access inside most of the walls. From what can be seen on the ground however, the site is still hugely impressive with much of the southern walls still intact (Fig. 25.6). Foss' measurements assess the distance between the furthest surviving towers as 475m, with towers set every 30 or 40m.¹⁹ This is a strikingly large site for any mere "fortified camp", as by comparison with other Byzantine sites – such as the cities of Ankara, Amorion and Nicaea that were visited as part of the same fieldwork – it is of similar size. Lopadion had one third of the north/south length of the great city of Antioch (Fig. 25.7), and was almost as big as medieval Thessalonike and Nicaea, at roughly 500m long by 200m wide, according to the plans given in Foss' same study.²⁰ In addition, it dwarfs fortifications such as Krac des Chevaliers (Fig. 25.8), or British castles such as Caernarvon (Fig. 25.9), or, indeed, classical Roman legion forts such as Housesteads (Fig. 25.10), again suggesting that the site was more than just a fort at such a size.²¹ Equally, the flat and fertile hinterland (Fig. 25.11) is more than

15 Choniates, *Historia*, p. 33; *O City of Byzantium*, pp. 19–20.

16 Ibid. p. 360; p. 21 respectively.

17 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, p. 38; *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, p. 38.

18 Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, p. 143.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid. pp. 216–7, 224.

21 Ibid.

adequate for the arable land needed to support such a large settlement, as well as additional permanent or temporary housing, space for animals and other military facilities outside the walls. Ioannes' frequent stays at Lopadion with his army mentioned above suggest that these facilities must have been present there. Thus this site could well have sprawled far beyond even the ten hectares of the modern farm.

The argument here, therefore, is that Lopadion was no temporary military encampment, but rather a full-fledged town if not a small city. Though only an archaeological dig could prove this hypothesis for certain, all evidence for this being more than a "fortified camp" in other sources leaves little room for doubt. One of these additional pieces of evidence tells us that it became a bishop's see. This can be determined from its appearance on the synodal register as a metropolitan see in 1178, its first mention in the register.²² Secondly, Choniates tells us that in 1184 the Emperor Andronikos deprived "the bishop of Lopadion" of one of his eyes for allowing rebels to move near the city.²³ Whether Lopadion's status as a see had changed yet again when Choniates wrote his history, or whether there is something more complicated going on here, the status of Lopadion as having a bishop or metropolitan suggests a large population at the very least, and perhaps the presence of an important church as would be expected in an important town or city.

From the one foray that was possible inside the extant walls, one structure at least contains the same masonry types identified by Foss (Fig. 25.12) which was on the same axis as the bridge, and the site was covered with further fragments of masonry of the same type as this structure and the walls.²⁴ Thus the remains of these buildings date to the same phase of building as the walls, revealing a huge imperial project in size, duration and funding, much in excess of any other fortifications built by Ioannes. We thus have evidence of Lopadion as the site of the early *xenodocheion*, the office of a *kommerkiarios*, the seat of an *archon*, the site of a market suitable for selling to the armies of the Second Crusade, and a bishop or metropolitan's see, in addition to imposing walls and a strategic bridge. Its role as a town or city can be even further examined in the rhetorical works of the period, where we are fortunate to have a poem, part

22 *Notitiae Episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. Jean Darrouzès (Paris, 1981), p. 133.

23 Choniates, *Historia*, p. 289; *O City of Byzantium*, p. 160.

24 The difficulty in gathering the data was acute, due to overgrown vegetation, barbed wire fences, dogs and an irate Turkish farmer on a motorbike.

ekphrasis, part *epinikion*, describing one of the emperor’s sojourns in Lopadion, when the court poet Theodoros Prodromos accompanied him personally.²⁵

It describes how Prodromos travelled around the “city of Lopadion” (Λοπαδίτιν πόλιν), marvelling at its magnificence, an easy thing to visualise as shown in Figs. 25.13 and 25.14 that show the scale of the surviving towers, which would have been even taller adjusting for a lower ground height. The use of “city” could, of course, be poetic inflation of the size and importance of the settlement, but Prodromos appears not to use the word lightly. He mentions how even he, as a “μαενα” (a small fish) was full of courage because he knew he was safe there from the “Persian fist and blades”, protected because Ioannes had:

[...] been given by God to Rome as a wall and a defence, a stronghold, a rampart, a tower both strong and great, irresistible battlement, adamantine moat, a stumbling block for your enemies, according to him who crowned you a stone stronghold for the Roman people.²⁶

Prodromos deliberately equates Ioannes’ virtues with the strength of Lopadion, which intensifies the praise both of the emperor and of the ‘city’ itself. Choniates reinforces this impression, mentioning that “the ladies of the court” stayed at Lopadion during the summer of 1139 while Ioannes was conducting operations against the Turks, and specifically also says “when the ladies of the court had left the city” of Lopadion. Multiple sources in addition attest that Empress Eirene died in Bithynia, though no source specifies the location of her death.²⁷ Given the central role played by Lopadion during Ioannes II’s reign, and the fact that the court seems to have taken up residence there during the emperor’s campaigns, it is not impossible that it was in this ‘city’ that she died. It was not unusual for imperial women to accompany the emperor on campaign during the middle Byzantine period, and they usually resided in the main ‘city’ used as a forward base of operations during Ioannes’ reign. Thus their presence again exemplifies Lopadion’s status as the site chosen to host the imperial court in the province, as if it was safe enough for the “small

25 *Theodore Prodromos: historische Gedichte*, ed. Wolfram Hörandner (Wien, 1974), Poem 18.

26 Ibid. Poem 18, lines 85–90: “τείχος ἐδόθης ἐκ θεοῦ καὶ πρόβλημα τῇ Πώμῃ, ὀχύρωμα, χαράκωμα, πύργος στερρὸς καὶ μέγας, πυργόβαρις ἀπρόσμαχος, τάφος ἀδαμαντίνη, πέτρα σκανδάλου τοῖς ἐχθροῖς κατὰ τὸν στέψαντά σε καὶ λίθος ὀχυρώματος τῷ γένει τῶν Ῥωμαίων.”

27 Choniates, *Historia*, p. 33. See also “Vita beatae imperatricis Irenes (Synaxerion 12 August),” *Az Árpád-Kori Magyar Történet Bizánci Forrásai, Fontes Byzantini Historiae Hungaricae Aevo Ducum et Regum ex Stirpe Árpád Descendentium*, ed. and trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Budapest, 1988), pp. 117 and 120; Prodromos, *historische Gedichte*, Poem 7, line 24.

fish” Prodromos to walk its streets, then it was definitely safe for the ladies of the court.²⁸ With such frequent visits, we could perhaps add some form of provincial palace to the list of buildings that an archaeological dig might unearth.

More striking to the audience, and of great relevance to our understanding of the perception of Lopadion by contemporaries however, is the following stanza that begins with: “οἰκίζεις τὴν ἀοίκητον”. This has the meaning of: “you plant a settlement in uninhabited lands”, and indeed the verb has been used for ‘founding a colony’ in antique texts.²⁹ A theme of ‘taming the wilderness’ is developed over the course of this stanza: building roads through trackless wastes, bringing water to dry land, saving the sheep from the wolves – this is Prodromos’ conception of what the emperor was doing in Asia Minor, and thus how it was presented to the court in Constantinople.³⁰ Indeed as well as Lopadion, if the poem were dated to 1139 when Choniates relates that Ioannes conducted operations from there, it could also refer to the building of the fortress of Anchyrus mentioned as occurring in the same year, as this smaller fortress to the south also fits the same strategic and ideological purposes as Lopadion.³¹ Prodromos’ message is made plain at the close of the poem, as he reasons that through this building, this taming of the land, the Romans will be saved both now and in the future through Ioannes:

28 For a full discussion of Byzantine ladies on campaign in the twelfth century see Lynda Garland, “Imperial Women and Entertainment at the Middle Byzantine Court,” in *Byzantine Women: Varieties of Experience*, ed. idem (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 181–182. Ioannes’ eldest twins were born on campaign in Balabista in Macedonia: Anna Komnene, *Alexiade*, p. 66. Our chroniclers often mention Ioannes taking up residence in a specific city at each longer campaign where he would have to overwinter: Berrhoia (Stara Zagora) against the Pechenegs, Branitshevo for Hungary, Kinte in Pontus (interpreted by Chalandon to be Kundu): Chalandon, *Jean II Comnène*, 1:177; Kinnamos, *Epitome*, pp. 7, 11; *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, pp. 16, 19 respectively; Choniates, *Historia*, p. 34; *O City of Byzantium*, p. 20 respectively.

29 *Prodromos, historische Gedichte*, Poem 18, line 91. For use of the word in antiquity, see “οἰκίζω,” *Greek-English Lexicon with Revised Supplement*, Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott (Oxford, 1996), p. 1203.

30 Further discussion on the use of court poetry as the means of political discourse concerning Anatolia at the court of Ioannes II can be found in Maximilian Lau, “The Power of Poetry—Portraying the Expansion of the Empire under John II Komnenos,” in *Landscapes of Power Selected Papers from the XV Oxford University Byzantine Society International Graduate Conference*, ed. Maximilian Lau, Caterina Franchi, and Morgan Di Rodi (Oxford, 2014), pp. 195–214.

31 Choniates, *Historia*, p. 33.

Second Rome, Queen of Cities, most noble new Rome, Rome superior in strength to ancient Rome, and though later in time and second, a city most excellent of all cities. A country most fair of all countries, longest in its length, broadest in its structure, firm in its battlements, most mighty in its walls, the city selected by God who rules over all. A most excellent city of the sole ruling Komnenos, add to the victories of your *despotēs* Ioannes also this victory over the ravening Persians. Leap and dance! For you have found, truly you have found, your resurrection and your renewal.³²

This mission statement of Roman patriotism, Komnenian legitimacy and imperial renewal is to be found in many other poems by Prodromos – as well as by other authors in the mid-twelfth century. Elsewhere, Prodromos sets out how Ioannes II would surely revitalise Byzantium and expand its frontiers. He states that the emperor ordered steles built in all lands as far as the Nile in anticipation of a major revival; he talks too of wilderness being tamed and transformed into gardens, evoking ideals and methods that stretch back to the expansion of early Greece and Rome.³³ Examining these rhetorical works concerning Asia Minor from Ioannes’ reign presents us with a specific political agenda, one that is continued into the reign of Manuel and presented by his own court rhetors.³⁴ In the political discourse of the capital, Lopadion exemplified that this foreign land had not only been conquered but also settled and tamed with Roman cities, a trope that Magdalino notes from the panygyrical works of Eustathios of Thessalonike for the reign of Manuel too.³⁵ Simply because Lopadion was not a classical colony that became a town or city, but was developed in the twelfth century, it has been seen by scholars as a fort or supply camp. In fact, it should be recognised as having been raised to the status of a Roman ‘city’, or indeed colony, by Ioannes and his building work. Moreover, we must remember that the cultural baggage we attach to the term ‘city’ is also relevant to Prodromos and his audience, so that if they saw fit to construct Lopadion in such a light to their audiences, then modern scholars must take note of this and square this fact with their own analysis.

This literary portrayal of Lopadion’s ‘civic’ nature was only emphasised by its very real strategic benefits for the attempted consolidation of imperial suzerainty over Asia Minor. Paul Magdalino has argued that the thirteenth century ‘Empire of Nicaea’ was built upon a successful restoration of imperial power

32 *Prodromos, historische Gedichte*, Poem 18, lines 97–108.

33 *Ibid.* Poem 19, lines 117 and 125.

34 Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 175.

35 *Ibid.* pp. 175–176.

in western Anatolia, something the Komnenoi have rarely been given credit for. Whilst an evaluation of the success or otherwise of the Komnenian conquests in Anatolia is beyond the scope of this paper, Lopadion's place within that scheme can be examined.³⁶

Lopadion alone did not have the substantial defences required to stall a committed enemy invasion, such as those built at Nicaea, or those built for fortresses located at naturally impregnable sites such as Kastamon and Gangra.³⁷ It was, however, not on its own, but part of a network of fortifications across Asia Minor, and more specifically along the roads and river valleys of the provinces bordering the Turkish lands or sphere of influence. Lopadion was chosen as the site for Ioannes' base of operations in Asia Minor because of its place in this network, rather than for its natural defensive characteristics. The new fortress of Anchymous, too, was built on the banks of a river (the Makestos), to the south of the modern town of Balıkesir and the Susurluk River. As well as guarding the river, it is on the main Roman road between the Mysian plain and the now recovering provinces of Lydia and Ionia, making its location again chosen more for strategic rather than defensive reasons.³⁸ Even with regard to this strategic benefit however, the largest towers are the ones that face the road, demonstrating the importance of the visual statement this fortress made, and thus its ideological as well as strategic significance.

Though Choniates and Kinnamos mention only Lopadion and Anchymous as being built by Ioannes, in Foss' study he has identified others by their stylistic and material construction, along with strategic location, as also being from his reign.³⁹ Less than 100km north and downriver from Anchymous is the modern village of Sultançayır, site of a large Constantinian Bridge over the Makestos, which at the time of Foss' study had some remnants of a Byzantine fortification with the same decorative zig-zag cloisonné masonry as Anchymous.⁴⁰ Where

36 Ibid. p. 124.

37 Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, pp. 16, 79–120.

38 Clive Foss, "The Defences of Asia Minor against the Turks," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 27 (1982), p. 162.

39 Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, pp. 146–147.

40 Ibid. pp. 191–192. See Fig. 25.23 for the site as Foss saw it. Unfortunately during field work in 2013 the site seems to have disappeared, almost certainly covered by a newly built motorway rest stop that appears consistent with Foss' directions for locating the site. The remains of the Makestos bridge are also in an increasingly dilapidated state compared to the very well preserved remains encountered in 1902 by the German archaeologist Theodore Wiegand, discussed in his: "Reisen in Mysien," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung* 29 (1904), pp. 300–301. For the bridge as he saw it, see Fig. 25.24, and as it was seen in 2013 see Fig. 25.25.

Sultançayır is on the same river as Anchyrus, Pegadia is on the same road, only thirty kilometres to the west and at a site that Anna Komnene mentions was threatened by the Turks in her fathers' day as they sought to break back through to the coast. Thus this would be an obvious site for Ioannes to establish control, so that he could expand west from there by further fort building.⁴¹

This network of fortresses – and there were fortresses built during the reign of Alexios or earlier that would have been part of this network, or indeed fortresses we have yet to discover or that have not survived – hints at the other half of Ioannes' strategy for Asia Minor that up until now has also received little scholarly comment: that of his defensive strategy.⁴² This must have played an integral role in transforming Asia Minor from a hostile land, overrun by Turks, into the prosperous imperial province and heartland of the resurgent successor state of Nicaea.⁴³ This network of fortifications, controlling the lines of communication and logistics, lies at the heart of this successful strategy – and indeed has similarities to Byzantine strategy in the Balkans, where the fords over the Danube and the roads and river valleys were also the focus of an imperial network of fortifications according to the recent study by Alexandru Madgearu.⁴⁴ For both of these regions, the empire manages to turn the tables on their enemies by reversing the role of the actor pursuing the best 'active defence'. Whittow likens the Turks to the Spanish and the Byzantines to the Moors in the Iberian peninsular during the eleventh century; he notes that:

41 Foss, "Defences of Asia Minor," pp. 189–191. See also Anna Comnena, *Alexiade*, p. 180; *The Alexiad* p. 445. The directions given in Foss' work were insufficient to identify the exact location of this site in 2013, but for the fortification as Foss saw it see Fig. 25.26, where again the zig-zag pattern was in evidence as a key determiner of stylistic dating, in addition to the *terminus post quem* of post Alexios' reign due to the reference in the *Alexiad*, and the unlikelihood that Manuel would build a fortress so far behind the borders by his reign (and that it would not be noted in the better sources of his reign if he had).

42 The unfortunate Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes had refortified Sozopolis in 1070 according to an inscription, making it certainly part of this network. For full discussion, see Foss, "Defences of Asia Minor," pp. 153–157. Other studies on Ioannes' 'strategy', such as those of Birkenmeier, *The Development of the Komnenian Army* and Papageorgiou, *Conclusions on John II Komnenos* have focused upon his strategy for expansion rather than his strategy for defending what he had.

43 Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel*, p. 124.

44 Alexandru Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization of the Danube, 10th–12th Centuries* (Leiden, 2013), p. 169.

The Turks were not invincible; their herds were as vulnerable as Byzantine villages; but their defeat or containment required an effective system of local defence based on a network of castles whose garrisons were prepared to launch counter-strikes in response to Turkish raids.

This is exactly what Ioannes sets up in the twelfth century in western Anatolia to secure his conquests.⁴⁵ Birkenmeier theorises that Ioannes' strategy rested on capturing strongpoints that would then hold out against the Turks, and this surely was part of the plan – Ioannes' focus on capturing Laodikiea, Sozopolis, Kastamon and Gangra make that plain.⁴⁶ However, equally important was the capturing of the smaller fortresses of Alamos, Alazos and Balza around the latter two cities, and building this network so that there would be fortresses across all of populated western Asia Minor. This was a well-nuanced and planned network of fortifications operating on a very specific operational code – comparisons with Bakirtzis' "protective ring" of fortresses around fourteenth century Thessalonike, and Haldon's tenth century east Anatolian frontier based around defence in depth, do not accurately portray what is occurring.⁴⁷ Ioannes' network embraces the whole region, rather than specifically protecting population centres, and rather than establishing a frontier zone of control or 'march', these fortresses are carrying out active defence of these areas by controlling lines of communication and logistics. Thus would these regions become safe to inhabit, and prosper, as part of a process that would continue into Manuel's reign, with Choniates describing the fortification of threatened Anatolian cities as the act "most beneficial to common welfare" of anything Manuel ever performed.⁴⁸

45 Mark Whittow, "How the East Was Lost: The Background to the Komnenian Reconquista," in *Alexios I Komnenos Papers of the Second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 14–16 April 1989* ed. Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe (Belfast, 1996), p. 66.

46 Birkenmeier's thesis is that "it was his [Ioannes'] deliberate strategy to obtain fortified points that would enable him [in the east] to threaten his most important foes, the Danishmendids": Birkenmeier, *The Development of the Komnenian Army*, p. 98. Though these sites are unidentified, a number of fortified hilltops from the era have been identified in Claudia Glatz and Roger Matthews, *At Empire's Edge: Project Paphlagonia: Regional Survey in North-Central Turkey* (London, 2009), pp. 195–197.

47 Nikolas Bakirtzis, "The Practice, Perception and Experience of Byzantine Fortification," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. Paul Stephenson (London, 2010), pp. 364–347; Haldon, *Warfare*, p. 65.

48 Choniates, *Historia*, p. 150; *O City of Byzantium*, p. 85; Cf. Nicholas S. M. Matheou, "Khoniates' Asia Minor: Earthly and Ultimate Causes of Decline," in *Landscapes of Power*, pp. 222–3.

A major proof of this is the fact that these fortresses were all built some distance back from the loose 'frontier' with the Seljuks and Danishmendids. Fig. 25.27 shows that Ioannes and his father had won victories much further east than where these fortresses were built. They were built to consolidate and hold provinces rather than to protect a far frontier, for Ioannes had recognised that Turkish raiders would bypass border forts to plunder the richer provinces farther west. Therefore these fortresses were built on lines of communication within these provinces, in order to be of far more use than fortresses built on the frontier farther east. Manuel's fortification of these sites won in his father's and grandfather's reigns increases our evidence for the success of this policy, as he extended it further east, while winning victories still further on so that open warfare would always be on his enemies' land.⁴⁹

In determining the role of Byzantine fortifications, Foss and Winfield's landmark study aimed merely to collate information so that historians and archaeologists might pursue the subject further. Doing just that, Bakirtzis states that Byzantine fortifications always seem to be organised into "broad and local defensive systems", while Nicolle has posited that there was some form of "broad defensive strategy directed from the centre."⁵⁰ This paper has set out to collate all the facts known concerning Lopadion so that we might deduce what that strategy might be, and what its role was therein – both in real strategic terms, adding to our knowledge on where the frontier was in this period (Fig. 25.27), and in contemporary political discourse. Such a network of fortresses, all built along roads and lines of communication and logistics, was built as part of a broad defensive strategy to secure the territory and therefore ensure its prosperity, rather than establish a military frontier, or circle of defence around a specific population centre. More than just Ioannes' rallying point of choice to launch campaigns, Lopadion was the headquarters of the emperor's defensive strategy, the nerve centre where he could direct operations against the Turks across the Anatolian theatre of war. Far from being a 'Chateau general', directing operations from Constantinople or even another major city such as Nicaea, Ioannes put his headquarters at the major cross-roads of roads and rivers in the area so that he could swiftly respond to situations as they arose, and that headquarters became at least a town, and possibly a city due to that imperial preference. This work was then broadcast to the Constantinopolitan court through poets such as Prodromos, who expounded in epic terms the processes that Ioannes set in motion, both to secure support

49 See Fig. 25.27.

50 Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, pp. xxv–xxvii; Bakirtzis, "The Practice," p. 359; David Nicolle, *Crusader Warfare*, 2 vols (London, 2007), 1:209.

from courtiers in the comfort of Constantinople, and to emphasise Ioannes' status as a true Roman Emperor, taming the wild lands of Anatolia with new colonies of Rome. In the stones of Lopadion we thus see the intersection of political rhetoric with realistic strategy, and can begin to understand, as Ioannes and his contemporaries understood, what role they played in twelfth-century Byzantine Asia Minor. This role might be even further understood if these stones could be properly examined by archaeologists –thus let this paper serve as a call for such work to be done in the future. The knowledge that could be gained from examining the medieval Roman 'city' of Emperor Ioannes II Komnenos, 'Ioannoupolis', would be invaluable not only to our comprehension of his reign, but also of Asia Minor's (re)urbanisation in the middle Byzantine period.



FIGURE 25.1 *The Bridge across the Ryndakos at Lopadion.*
AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.



FIGURE 25.2 *Detail of the bridge supports at Lopadion.*
AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.



FIGURE 25.3 *Lopadion Tower by the Gate. Foss, (1982), 160.*



FIGURE 25.4 *Lopadion Tower by Gate.*
AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.



FIGURE 25.5 *Lopadion Sheep Farm against the southern walls.*
AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.



FIGURE 25.6 *Lopadion Southern Walls, facing towards the main gate tower.*
AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.

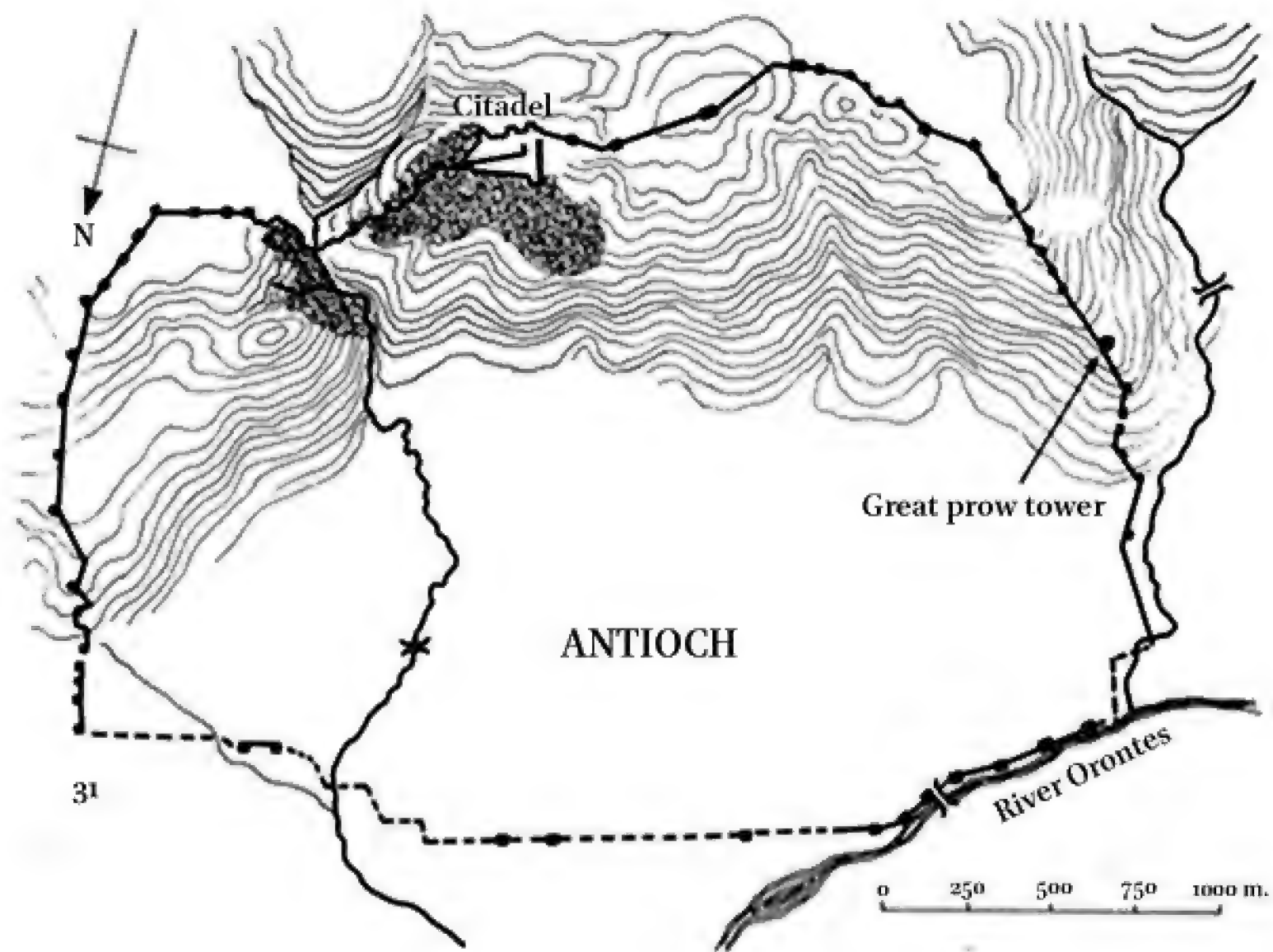


FIGURE 25.7 Plan of Antioch with scale, from Foss and Winfield, (1986), 216–7 and 224.

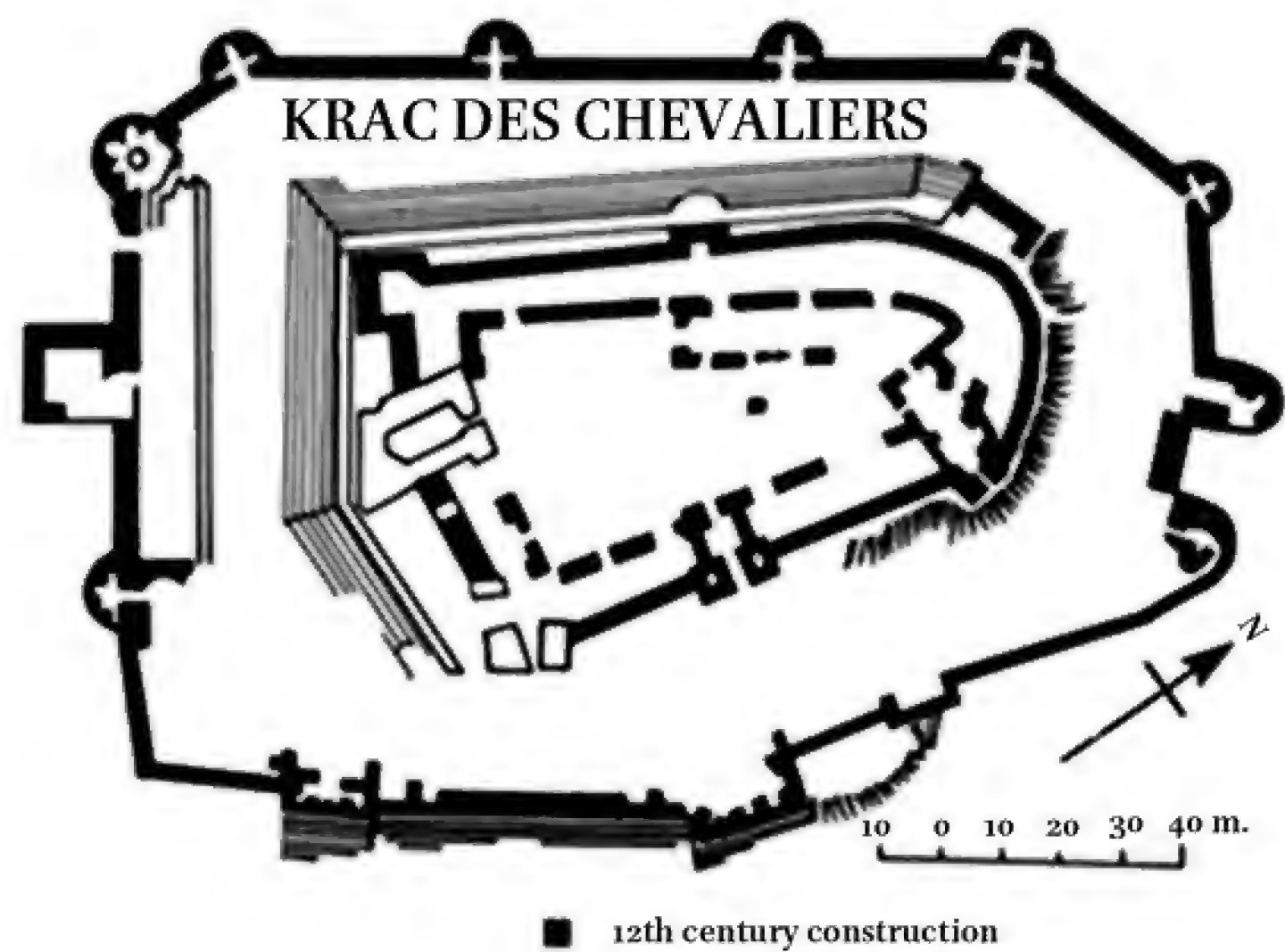


FIGURE 25.8 Plan of the Krac des Chevaliers with scale, from Foss and Winfield, (1986), 217.

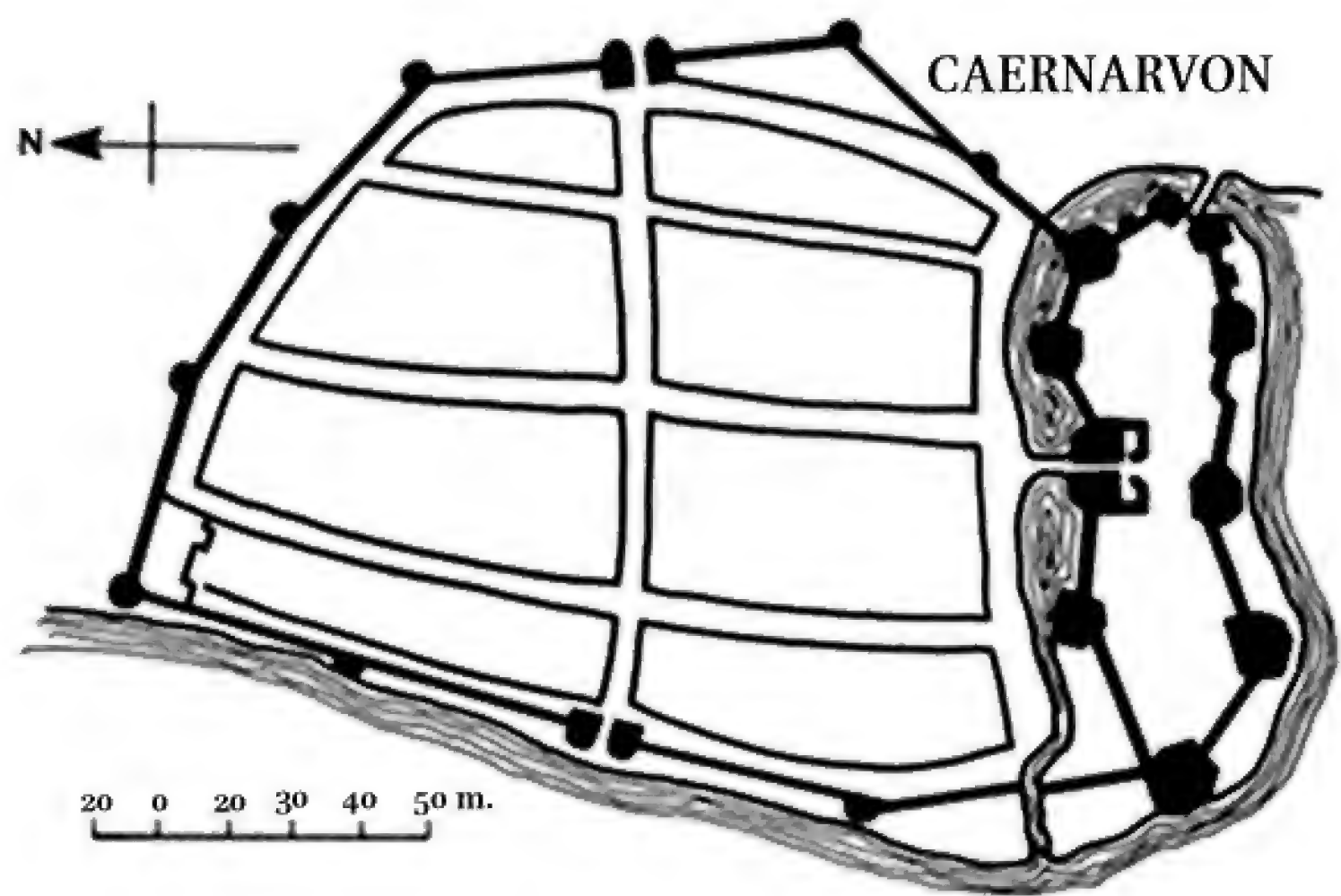


FIGURE 25.9 *Plan of Caernarvon Castle with scale, from Foss and Winfield, (1986), 224.*

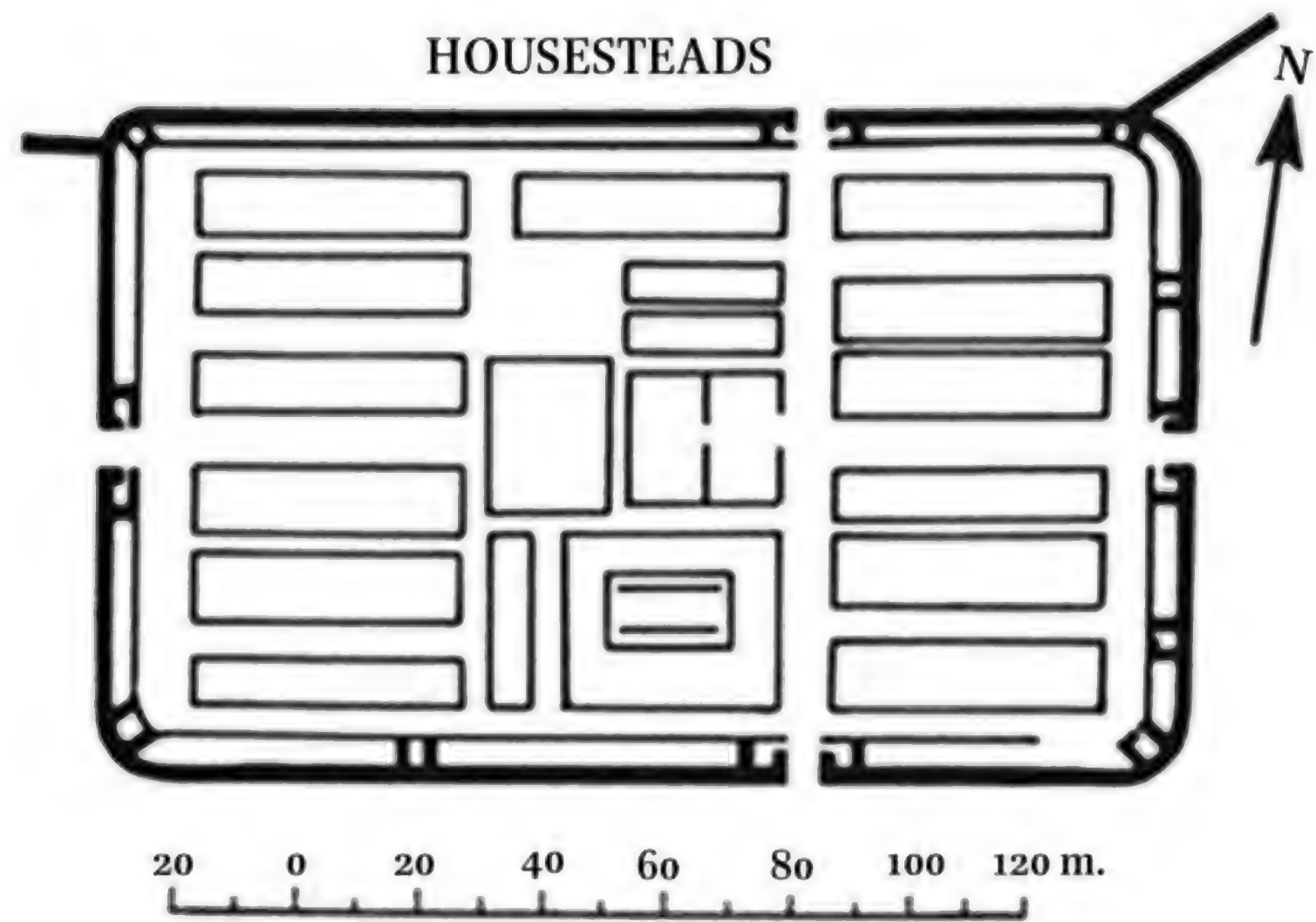


FIGURE 25.10 *Plan of Housesteads Legion Fort, plan from Foss and Winfield, (1986), 206.*



FIGURE 25.11 *Landscape surrounding Lopadion, photograph taken from the main tower by the gate at the south-eastern corner of the ruins.*
AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.



FIGURE 25.12 *Extant Structure of the same masonry type as the walls, from Summer 2013 Fieldwork.*



FIGURE 25.13

Lopadion South Wall Tower, with myself next to it for scale.

AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH
2013.



FIGURE 25.14

Lopadion South Wall Tower, Zoomed out.

AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH
2013.



FIGURE 25.15 *Anchyrous, view from the road with Western towers, Foss, (1982), 162.*



FIGURE 25.16 *Anchyrous North Tower with multiple decorative brick courses, Foss, (1982), 163.*



FIGURE 25.17 *Close up of Cloisonné, Foss, (1982), 165.*



FIGURE 25.18 *Anchyrus, photographed from the hill on the south side of the old river valley, showing the new dam and lake.*

AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.



FIGURE 25.19 *Anchyrous North Tower, with myself standing in the photograph for scale, as with Foss' photograph, note the decorative brick courses.*
AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.

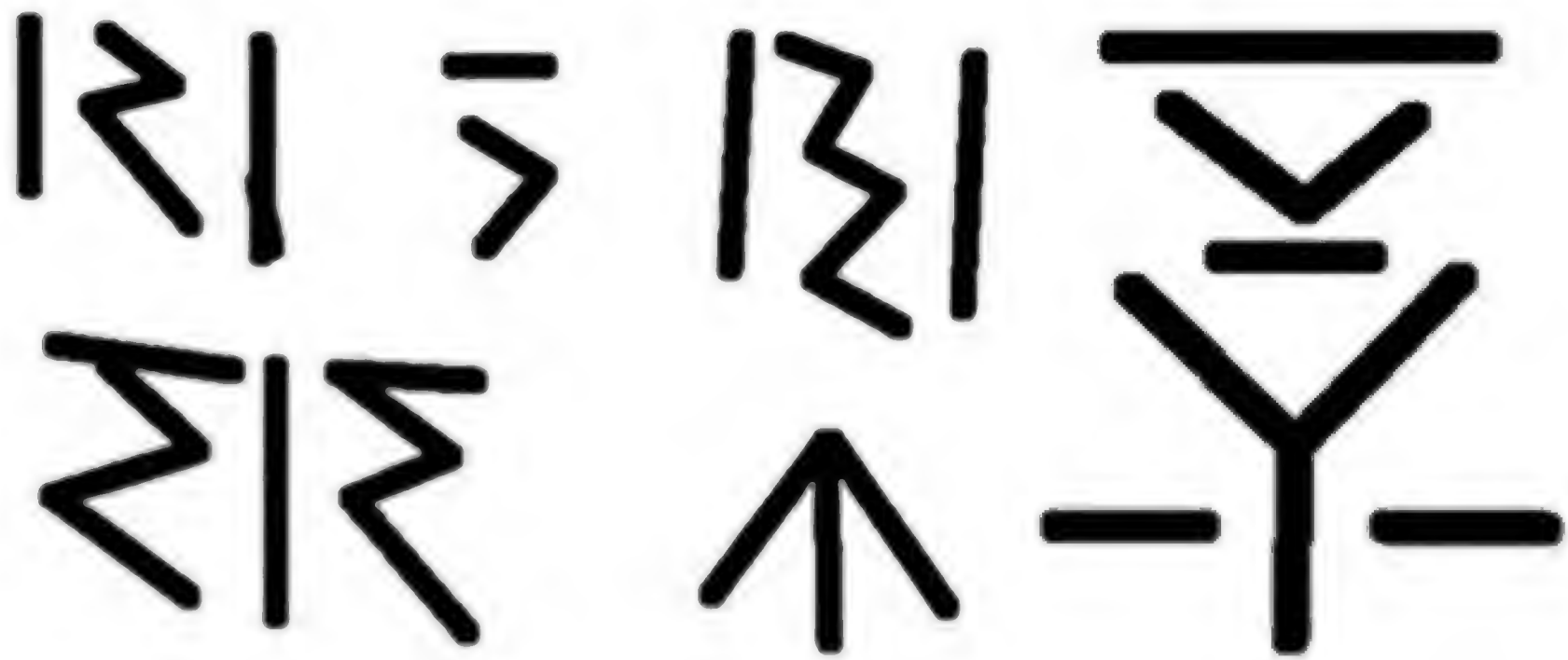


FIGURE 25.20 *Transcription of the cloisonné found at Anchyrus, showing ‘tree’ and ‘herringbone’ shapes, from sketches done by Foss, (1982), 164–5.*



FIGURE 25.21 *Church of SS Cosmas and Damian in Kastoria.*
 PHOTO: [HTTPS://COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKI/FILE:KOSTUR-SVETI-VRACH.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KOSTUR-SVETI-VRACH.JPG), ACCESSED 22 JANUARY 2016.



FIGURE 25.22 *Church of Hagios Nikolaos tou Kasnitze, Kastoria showing cloisonné. Kastoria showing cloisonné, in Epstein, (1980), 196.*

PHOTO: [HTTPS://COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKI/FILE:AGIOS_NIKOLAOS_KASNITZI_02.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AGIOS_NIKOLAOS_KASNITZI_02.JPG), ACCESSED 22 JANUARY 2016.



FIGURE 25.23 *Surviving tower of Sultançayır as Foss saw it, with similar cloisonné masonry patterns to Anchyrus. Foss, (1982), 162.*

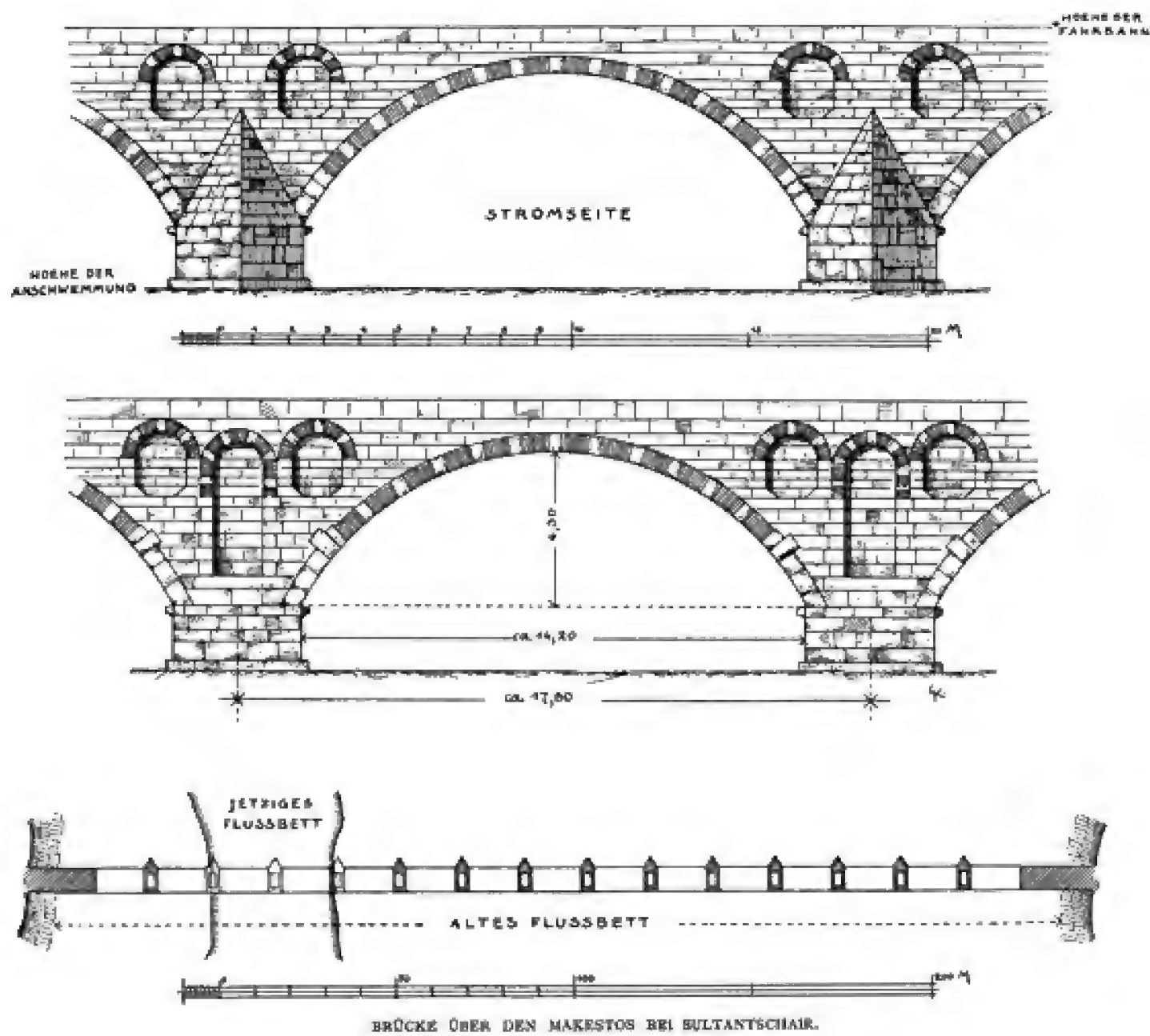


FIGURE 25.24 *Plan of the Makestos Bridge. Wiegand (1904), 301.*



FIGURE 25.25 *The Makestos Bridge.*
AUTHOR’S OWN PHOTOGRAPH 2013.



FIGURE 25.26 *Pegadia Tower, again showing the cloisonné masonry of the period. From Foss, (1982), 191.*

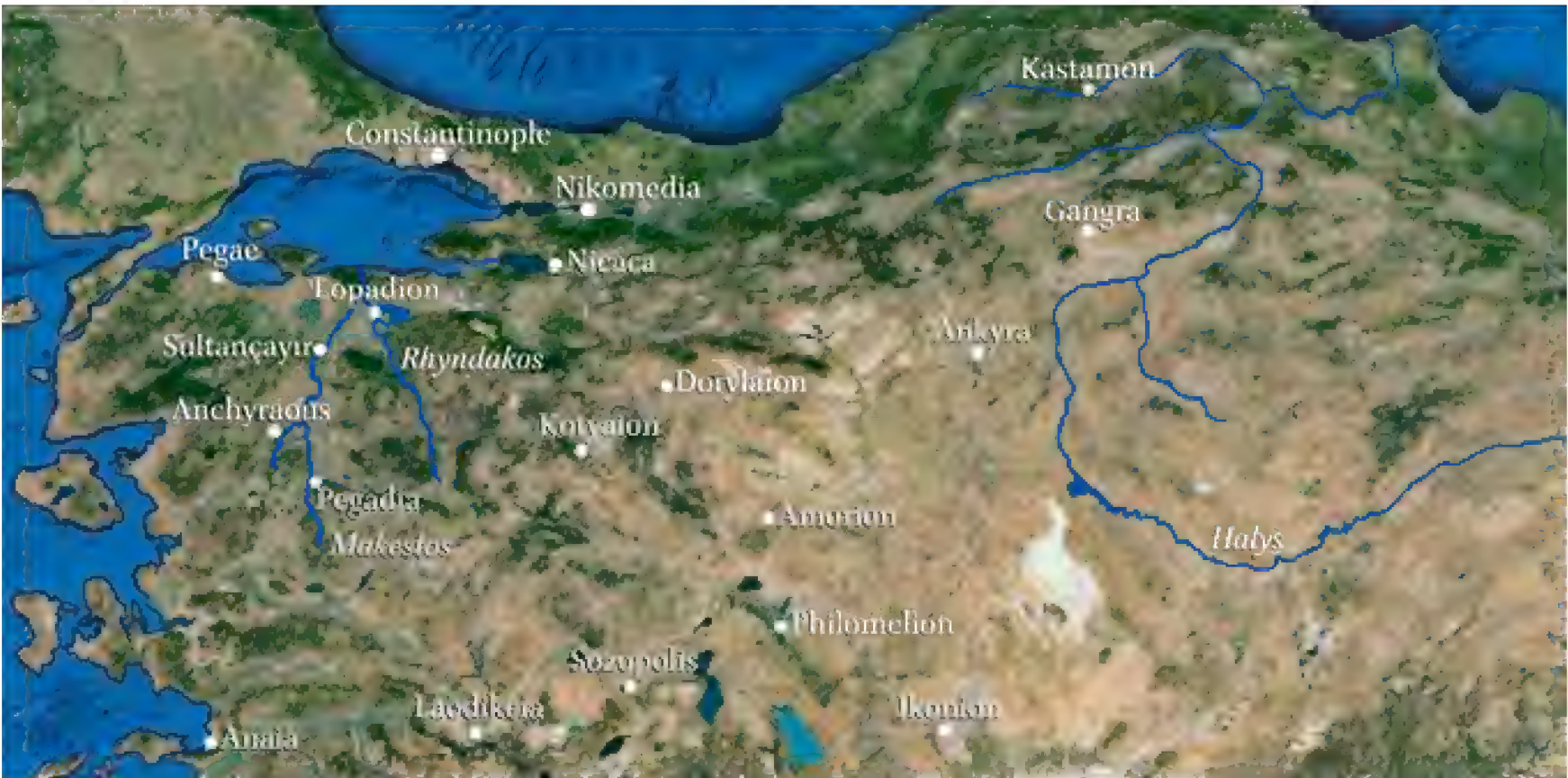


FIGURE 25.27 *Maps of Asia Minor with named locations from the reigns of the Komnenoi.*

Concerning those locations not mentioned in the body of this paper, Ikonion and Ancyra were the capitals of the Seljuk and Danishmendid Sultanates respectively. Philomelion is the site of a victory by both Alexios and Manuel against the Seljuks, though on both occasions it was burned and its people brought back to Byzantine lands. Ioannes is said by Prodromos to have won a victory at nearby Amorion, but there is no mention of him incorporating and fortifying it into his empire directly. Kotyaion and Dorylaion are both mentioned as being captured by the armies of the First Crusade in 1095 (the latter is the site of a defeat for the Germans during the Second Crusade), and are sites of battles during the reign of Manuel, with him being mentioned as refortifying the latter in 1175. Nicaea and Nikomedia were both recaptured during the First Crusade, and are added for geopolitical reference. Sources: Philomelion: Comnène (1967), 201–13; Comnena, (1969), p. 482; Kinnamos, (1836), p. 40; Tr: Kinnamos, (1976), pp. 40–1; Amorion: Prodromos, (1974), Poem IV, line 272; Dorylaion: Kinnamos, (1836), p. 294–7; Tr: Kinnamos, (1976), pp. 220–2, for Kotyaion: Kinnamos, (1836), p. 191; Tr: Kinnamos, (1976), p. 145;

As such, the frontier at the start of Ioannes’ reign would have been in the area along the yellow line below:



And would have followed this line at the end of Ioannes' reign:



With sites such as Dorylaion, Kotyaion, Amorion and Philomelion being in a zone often occupied by Turks, but frequently raided by the imperial army, it is this zone that Manuel began to annex during his reign.

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